

THE

ATLANTIC MONTHLY:

A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art, and Politics.

VOL. LVII. — FEBRUARY, 1886. — No. CCCXL.

THE PRINCESS CASAMASSIMA.

BOOK SECOND.

XVII.

HYACINTH had been warned by Mr. Vetch as to what brilliant women might do with him (it was only a word on the old fiddler's life, but the word had had a point), he had been warned by Paul Muniment, and now he was admonished by a person supremely well placed for knowing — a fact that could not fail to deepen the emotion which, any time these three days, had made him draw his breath more quickly. That emotion, however, was now not of a kind to make him fear remote consequences; as he looked over the Princess Casamassima's drawing-room, and inhaled an air that seemed to him inexpressibly delicate and sweet, he hoped that his adventure would throw him upon his mettle only half as much as the old lady had wished to intimate. He considered, one after the other, the different chairs, couches, and ottomans the room contained — he wished to treat himself to the most sumptuous — and then, for reasons he knew best, sank into a seat covered with rose-colored brocade, of which the legs and frame appeared to be of pure gold. Here he sat perfectly still, with only his heart beating very sensibly, and his eyes coursing, again and again, from one object to another. The splendors and sug-

gestions of Captain Sholto's apartment were thrown completely into the shade by the scene before him, and as the Princess did not scruple to keep him waiting for twenty minutes (during which the butler came in and set out, on a small table, a glittering tea-service) Hyacinth had time to count over the innumerable *bibelots* (most of which he had never dreamed of) involved in the personality of a woman of high fashion, and to feel that their beauty and oddity revealed not only whole provinces of art, but refinements of choice, on the part of their owner, complications of mind, and — almost — terrible depths of character.

When at last the door opened, and the servant, reappearing, threw it far back, as if to make a wide passage for a person of the importance of his mistress, Hyacinth's suspense became very acute; it was much the same feeling with which, at the theatre, he had sometimes awaited the entrance of a celebrated actress. In this case the actress was to perform for him alone. There was still a moment before she came on, and when she did so she was so simply dressed — besides his seeing her now on her feet — that she looked like a different person. She approached him rapidly, and a little stiffly and shyly, but in

the manner in which she shook hands with him there was an evident desire to be frank, and even fraternal. She looked like a different person, but that person had a beauty even more radiant; the fairness of her face shone forth at our young man as if to dissipate any doubts that might have crept over him as to the reality of the vision bequeathed to him by his former interview. And in this brightness and richness of her presence he could not have told you whether she struck him as more proud or more kind.

"I have kept you a long time, but it's supposed not, usually, to be a bad place, my *salon*; there are various things to look at, and perhaps you have noticed them. Over on that side, for instance, there is rather a curious collection of miniatures." She spoke abruptly, quickly, as if she were conscious that their communion might be awkward, and she were trying to strike, instantly (to conjure that element away), the sort of note that would make them both most comfortable. Quickly, too, she sat down before her tea-tray and poured him out a cup, which she handed him without asking whether he would have it. He accepted it with a trembling hand, though he had no desire for it; he was too nervous to swallow the tea, but it would not have occurred to him that it was possible to decline. When he had murmured that he had indeed looked at all her things, but that it would take hours to do justice to such treasures, she asked if he were fond of works of art; adding, however, immediately, that she was afraid he had not many opportunities of seeing them, though, of course, there were the public collections, open to all. Hyacinth said, with perfect veracity, that some of the happiest moments of his life had been spent at the British Museum and the National Gallery, and this reply appeared to interest her greatly, so that she immediately begged him to tell her what he thought of certain

pictures and antiques. In this way it was that, in an incredibly short space of time, as it appeared to him, he found himself discussing the Bacchus and Ariadne and the Elgin marbles with "the most remarkable woman in Europe." It is true that she herself talked most, passing precipitately from one point to another, asking him questions and not waiting for answers; describing and qualifying things, expressing feelings, by the aid of phrases that he had never heard before, but which seemed to him illuminating and happy — as when, for instance, she asked what art was, after all, but a synthesis made in the interest of pleasure, or said that she did n't like England at all, but loved it. It did not occur to him to think these discriminations pedantic. Suddenly she remarked, "Madame Grandoni told me you saw my husband."

"Ah, was the gentleman your husband?"

"Unfortunately! What do you think of him?"

"Oh, I can't think" — Hyacinth murmured.

"I wish I could n't, either! I have n't seen him for nearly three years. He wanted to see me to-day, but I refused."

"Ah!" said Hyacinth, staring, and not knowing how he ought to receive so unexpected a confidence. Then, as the suggestions of inexperience are sometimes the happiest of all, he spoke simply what was in his mind, and said, gently, "It has made you very nervous." Afterwards, when he had left the house, he wondered how, at that stage, he could have ventured on such a familiar remark.

The Princess took it with a quick, surprised laugh. "How do you know that?" But before he had time to tell how, she added, "Your saying that — that way — shows me how right I was to ask you to come to see me. You know, I hesitated. It shows me you

have perceptions; I guessed as much the other night at the theatre. If I had n't, I would n't have asked you. I may be wrong, but I like people who understand what one says to them, and also what one does n't say."

"Don't think I understand too much. You might easily exaggerate that," Hyacinth declared, conscientiously.

"You confirm, completely, my first impression," the Princess returned, smiling in a way that showed him he really amused her. "We shall discover the limits of your comprehension! I am atrociously nervous. But it will pass. How is your friend the dressmaker?" she inquired, abruptly. And when Hyacinth had briefly given some account of poor Pinnie — told her that she was tolerably well for her, but old and tired and sad, and not very successful — she exclaimed, impatiently, "Ah, well, she's not the only one!" and came back, with irrelevance, to the former question. "It's not only my husband's visit — absolutely unexpected! — that has made me fidgety, but the idea that, now you have been so kind as to come here, you may wonder why, after all, I made such a point of it, and even think any explanation I might be able to give you entirely insufficient."

"I don't want any explanation," said Hyacinth.

"It's very nice of you to say that, and I shall take you at your word. Explanations usually make things worse. All the same, I don't want you to think (as you might have done so easily the other evening) that I wish only to treat you as a curious animal."

"I don't care how you treat me!" said Hyacinth, smiling.

There was a considerable silence, after which the Princess remarked, "All I ask of my husband is to let me alone. But he won't. He won't reciprocate my indifference."

Hyacinth asked himself what reply he ought to make to such an announce-

ment as that, and it seemed to him that the least civility demanded was that he should say — as he could with such conviction — "It can't be easy to be indifferent to you."

"Why not, if I am odious? I can be — oh, there is no doubt of that! However, I can honestly say that with the Prince I have been exceedingly reasonable, and that most of the wrongs — the big ones, those that settled the question — have been on his side. You may tell me, of course, that that's the pretension of every woman who has made a mess of her marriage. But ask Madame Grandoni."

"She will tell me it's none of my business."

"Very true — she might!" the Princess admitted, laughing. "And I don't know, either, why I should talk to you about my domestic affairs; except that I have been wondering what I could do to show confidence in you, in return for your showing so much in me. As this matter of my separation from my husband happens to have been turned uppermost by his sudden descent upon me, I just mention it, though the subject is tiresome enough. Moreover, I ought to let you know that I have very little respect for distinctions of class — the sort of thing they make so much of in this country. They are doubtless convenient in some ways, but when one has a reason — a reason of feeling — for overstepping them, and one allows one's self to be deterred by some dreary superstition about one's place, or some one else's place, then I think it's ignoble. It always belongs to one's place not to be a poor creature. I take it that if you are a socialist you think about this as I do; but lest, by chance, as the sense of those differences is the English religion, it may have rubbed off even on you, though I am more and more impressed with the fact that you are scarcely more British than I am; lest you should, in spite of your

theoretic democracy, be shocked at some of the applications that I, who cherish the creed, am capable of making of it, let me assure you without delay that in that case we should n't get on together at all, and had better part company before we go further." She paused, long enough for Hyacinth to declare, with a great deal of emphasis, that he was not easily shocked; and then, restlessly, eagerly, as if it relieved her to talk, and made their queer interview less abnormal that she should talk most, she arrived at the point that she wanted to know the *people*, and know them intimately — the toilers and strugglers and sufferers — because she was convinced they were the most interesting portion of society, and at the inquiry, "What could possibly be in worse taste than for me to carry into such an undertaking a pretension of greater delicacy and finer manners? If I must do that," she continued, "it's simpler to leave them alone. But I can't leave them alone; they press upon me, they haunt me, they fascinate me. There it is (after all, it's very simple): I want to know them, and I want you to help me!"

"I will help you with pleasure, to the best of my humble ability. But you will be awfully disappointed," Hyacinth said. Very strange it seemed to him that within so few days two ladies of rank should have found occasion to express to him the same mysterious longing. A breeze from a thoroughly unexpected quarter was indeed blowing over the aristocracy. Nevertheless, though there was much of the accent of passion in the Princess Casamassima's communication that there had been in Lady Aurora's, and though he felt bound to discourage his present interlocutress, as he had done the other, the force that pushed her struck him as a very different mixture from the shy, conscientious, anxious heresies of Rose Muniment's friend. The temper varied in the two women as much as the face

and the manner, and that perhaps made their curiosity the more significant.

"I have n't the least doubt of it: there is nothing in life in which I have not been awfully disappointed. But disappointment for disappointment, I shall like it better than some others. You'll not persuade me, either, that among the people I speak of, characters and passions and motives are not more natural, more complete, more *naïf*. The upper classes are so insipid! My husband traces his descent from the fifth century, and he's the greatest bore on earth. That is the kind of people I was condemned to live with after my marriage. Oh, if you knew what I have been through, you would allow that intelligent mechanics (of course I don't want to know idiots) would be a pleasant change. I must begin with some one — must n't I? — so I began, the other night, with you!" As soon as she had uttered these words the Princess added a correction, with the consciousness of her mistake in her face. It made that face, to Hyacinth, more nobly, tenderly pure. "The only objection to you, individually, is that you have nothing of the people about you — to-day not even the dress." Her eyes wandered over him from head to foot, and their friendly beauty made him ashamed. "I wish you had come in the clothes you wear at your work!"

"You see you do regard me as a curious animal," he answered.

It was perhaps to contradict this that, after a moment, she began to tell him more about her domestic affairs. He ought to know who she was, unless Captain Sholto had told him; and she related her parentage — American on the mother's side, Italian on the father's — and how she had led, in her younger years, a wandering, Bohemian life, in a thousand different places (always in Europe; she had never been in America and knew very little about it, though she wanted greatly to cross the Atlantic),

and largely, at one period, in Rome. She had been married by her people, in a mercenary way, for the sake of a fortune and a title, and it had turned out as badly as her worst enemy could wish. Her parents were dead, luckily for them, and she had no one near her of her own except Madame Grandoni, who belonged to her only in the sense that she had known her as a girl; was an association of her—what should she call them?—her innocent years. Not that she had ever been very innocent; she had had a horrible education. However, she had known a few good people—people she respected, then; but Madame Grandoni was the only one who had stuck to her. She, too, was liable to leave her any day; the Princess appeared to intimate that her destiny might require her to take some step which would test severely the old lady's adhesive property. It would detain her too long to make him understand the stages by which she had arrived at her present state of mind: her disgust with a thousand social arrangements; her rebellion against the selfishness, the corruption, the iniquity, the cruelty, the imbecility, of the people who, all over Europe, had the upper hand. If he could have seen her life, the *milieu* in which, for several years, she had been condemned to move, the evolution of her opinions (Hyacinth was delighted to hear her use that term) would strike him as perfectly logical. She had been humiliated, outraged, tortured; she considered that she too was one of the numerous class who could be put on a tolerable footing only by a revolution. At any rate, she had some self-respect left, and there was still more that she wanted to recover; the only way to arrive at that was to throw herself into some effort which would make her forget her own affairs and comprehend the troubles and efforts of others. Hyacinth listened to her with a wonderment which, as she went on, was transformed into fascinated

submission; she seemed so natural, so vivid, so exquisitely generous and sincere. By the time he had been with her for half an hour she had made the situation itself appear natural and usual, and a third person who should have joined them at this moment would have observed nothing to make him suppose that friendly social intercourse between little bookbinders and Neapolitan princesses was not, in London, a matter of daily occurrence.

Hyacinth had seen plenty of women who chattered about themselves and their affairs—a vulgar garrulity of confidence was indeed a leading characteristic of the sex as he had hitherto learned to know it—but he was quick to perceive that the great lady who took the trouble to open herself to him was not of a gossiping habit; that she must be, on the contrary, as a general thing, proudly, ironically, reserved, even to the point of passing, with many people, for a model of the unsatisfactory. It was very possible she was capricious; yet the fact that her present sympathies and curiosities might be a caprice wore, in Hyacinth's eyes, no sinister aspect. Why was it not a noble and interesting whim, and why might he not stand, for the hour at any rate, in the silvery moonshine it threw upon his path? It must be added that he was far from understanding everything she said, and some of her allusions and implications were so difficult to seize that they mainly served to reveal to him the limits of his own acquaintance with life. Her words evoked all sorts of shadowy suggestions of things he was condemned not to know, touching him most when he had not the key to them. This was especially the case with her reference to her career in Italy, on her husband's estates, and her relations with his family; who considered that they had done her a great honor in receiving her into their august circle (putting the best face on a bad business), after they had moved

heaven and earth to keep her out of it. The position made for her among these people, and what she had had to suffer from their family tone, their opinions and customs (though what these might be remained vague to her listener), had evidently planted in her soul a lasting resentment and contempt; and Hyacinth gathered that the force of reaction and revenge might carry her far, make her modern and democratic and heretical à outrance, lead her to swear by Darwin and Spencer and the revolutionary spirit. Our young man surely need not have been so sensible of the *lacunæ* in his comprehension of the Princess, when he could already surmise that personal passion had counted for so much in the formation of her views. This induction, however, which had no harshness, did not make her appear to him any the less a creature compounded of the finest elements; brilliant, delicate, complicated, but complicated with something divine. It was not until after he had left her that he became conscious she had forced him to talk, as well as talked herself. He drew a long breath as he reflected that he had not made quite such an ass of himself as might very well have happened; he had been saved by his enjoyment and admiration, which had not gone to his head and prompted him to show that he too, in his improbable little way, was remarkable, but had kept him in a state of anxious, delicious tension, as if the occasion had been a great solemnity. He had said, indeed, much more than he had warrant for, when she questioned him about his socialistic affiliations; he had spoken as if the movement were vast and complicated, whereas, in fact, so far, at least, as he was as yet concerned with it, and could answer for it from personal knowledge, it was circumscribed by the hideously papered walls of the little club room at the Sun and Moon. He reproached himself with this laxity, but it had not been engendered by vanity.

He was only afraid of disappointing his hostess too much; of making her say, "Why in the world, then, did you come to see me, if you have nothing more remarkable to relate?" — an inquiry to which, of course, he would have had an answer ready, if it had not been impossible to him to say that he had never asked to come; his coming was her own affair. He wanted too much to come a second time to have the courage to make that speech. Nevertheless, when she exclaimed, changing the subject, abruptly, as she always did, from something else they had been talking about, "I wonder whether I shall ever see you again!" he replied, with perfect sincerity, that it was very difficult for him to believe anything so delightful could be repeated. There were some kinds of happiness that to many people never came at all, and to others could come only once. He added, "It is very true I had just that feeling after I left you the other night at the theatre. And yet here I am!"

"Yes, there you are," said the Princess, thoughtfully, as if this might be a still graver and more embarrassing fact than she had yet supposed it. "I take it there is nothing essentially impossible in my seeing you again; but it may very well be that you will never again find it so pleasant. Perhaps that's the happiness that comes but once. At any rate, you know, I am going away."

"Oh yes, of course; every one leaves town," Hyacinth commented, sagaciously.

"Do you, Mr. Robinson?" asked the Princess.

"Well, I don't as a general thing. Nevertheless, it is possible that, this year, I may get two or three days at the seaside. I should like to take my old lady. I have done it before."

"And except for that you will be always at work?"

"Yes; but you must understand that I like my work. You must understand

that it's a great blessing for a young fellow like me to have it."

"And if you didn't have it, what would you do? Should you starve?"

"Oh, I don't think I should starve," the young man replied, judiciously.

The Princess looked a little chagrined, but after a moment she remarked, "I wonder whether you would come to see me, in the country, somewhere."

"Oh, dear!" Hyacinth exclaimed, catching his breath. "You are so kind, I don't know what to do."

"Don't be *banal*, please. That's what other people are. What's the use of my looking for something fresh in other walks of life, if you are going to be *banal*, too? I ask you, would you come?"

Hyacinth hesitated a moment. "Yes, I think I would come. I don't know, at all, how I should do it — there would be several obstacles; but wherever you should call for me, I would come."

"You mean you can't leave your work, like that; you might lose it, if you did, and be in want of money and much embarrassed?"

"Yes, there would be little difficulties of that kind. You see that immediately, in practice, great obstacles come up, when it's a question of a person like you making friends with a person like me."

"That's the way I like you to talk," said the Princess, with a pitying gentleness that seemed to her visitor quite sacred. "After all, I don't know where I shall be. I have got to pay stupid visits, myself, where the only comfort will be that I shall make the people jump. Every one here thinks me exceedingly odd — as there is no doubt I am! I might be ever so much more so if you would only help me a little. Why should n't I have my bookbinder, after all? In attendance, you know, it would be awfully *chic*. We might have immense fun, don't you think so? No doubt it will come. At any rate, I shall return

to London when I have got through that *corvée*; I shall be here next year. In the mean time, don't forget me," she went on, rising to her feet. "Remember, on the contrary, that I expect you to take me into the slums — into very bad places." Why the idea of these scenes of misery should have lighted up her face is more than may be explained; but she smiled down at Hyacinth — who, even as he stood up, was of slightly smaller stature — with all her strange, radiant sweetness. Then, in a manner almost equally incongruous, she added a reference to what she had said a moment before: "I recognize, perfectly, the obstacles, in practice, as you call them; but though I am not, by nature, persevering, and am really very easily put off, I don't consider that they will prove insurmountable. They exist on my side as well, and if you will help me to overcome mine, I will do the same for you, with yours."

These words, repeating themselves again and again in Hyacinth's consciousness, appeared to give him wings, to help him to float and soar, as he turned that afternoon out of South Street. He had at home a copy of Tennyson's poems — a single, comprehensive volume, with a double column on the page, in a tolerably neat condition, though he had handled it much. He took it to pieces that same evening, and during the following week, in his hours of leisure, at home in his little room, with the tools he kept there for private use, and a morsel of delicate, blue-tinted Russia leather, of which he obtained possession at the place in Soho, he devoted himself to the task of binding the book as perfectly as he knew how. He worked with passion, with religion, and produced a masterpiece of firmness and finish, of which his own appreciation was as high as that of M. Poupin, when, at the end of the week, he exhibited the fruit of his toil, and much more freely expressed than that of old Crookenden, who grant-

ed approbation, but was always too long-headed to create precedents. Hyacinth carried the volume to South Street, as an offering to the Princess; hoping she would not yet have left London, in which case he would ask the servant to deliver it to her, along with a little note he had sat up all night to compose. But the majestic butler, in charge of the house, opening the door, yet looking down at him as if from a second-story window, took the life out of his vision, and erected himself as an impenetrable medium. The Princess had been absent for some days; the butler was so good as to inform the young man with the parcel that she was on a visit to a "juke," in a distant part of the country. He offered, however, to receive, and even to forward, anything Hyacinth might wish to leave; but our hero felt a sudden indisposition to launch his humble tribute into the vast, the possible cold, unknown of a ducal circle. He decided to retain his little package for the present; he would give it to her when he should see her again, and he turned away without parting with it. Later, it seemed to create a sort of material link between the Princess and himself, and at the end of three months it almost appeared to him, not that the exquisite book was an intended present from his own hand, but that it had been placed in that hand by the most remarkable woman in Europe. Rare sensations and impressions, moments of acute happiness, almost always, with Hyacinth, in retrospect, became rather mythic and legendary; and the superior piece of work he had done, after seeing her last, in the immediate heat of his emotion, turned into a kind of proof and gage, as if a ghost, in vanishing from sight, had left a palpable relic.

XVIII.

The matter concerned him only indirectly, but it may concern the reader

more closely to know that before the visit to the duke took place Madame Grandoni granted to Prince Casamassima the private interview she had promised him on that sad Sunday afternoon. She crept out of South Street after breakfast — a repast which under the Princess's roof was served at twelve o'clock, in the foreign fashion — crossed the sultry solitude into which, at such a season, that precinct resolves itself, and entered the Park, where the grass was already brown and a warm, smoky haze prevailed, a sort of summer edition of what was most characteristic in the London air. The Prince met her, by appointment, at the gate, and they went and sat down together under the trees beside the drive, amid a wilderness of empty chairs, and with nothing to distract their attention from an equestrian or two, left over from the cavalcades of a fortnight before, and whose vain agitation in the saddle the desolate scene seemed to throw into high relief. They remained there for nearly an hour, though Madame Grandoni, in spite of her leaning to friendly interpretations, could not have told herself what comfort it was to the depressed, embarrassed young man at her side. She had nothing to say to him which could better his case, as he bent his mournful gaze on a prospect which was not, after all, perceptibly improved by its not being Sunday, and could only feel that, with her, he must seem to himself to be nearer his wife — to be touching something she had touched. The old lady wished he would resign himself more, but she was willing to minister to that thin illusion, little as she approved of the manner in which he had conducted himself at the time of the last sharp crisis in the remarkable history of his relations with Christina. He had behaved like a spoiled child, with a bad little nature, in a rage; he had been fatally wanting in dignity and wisdom, and had given the Princess an advantage which she

took on the spot and would keep forever. He had acted without manly judgment, had put his uncles upon her (as if she cared for his uncles, though one of them was a powerful prelate), had been suspicious and jealous on exactly the wrong occasions — occasions on which such ideas were a gratuitous injury. He had not been clever enough or strong enough to make good his valid rights, and had transferred the whole quarrel to a ground where his wife was far too accomplished a woman not to obtain the appearance of victory.

There was another reflection that Madame Grandoni made, as her interview with her dejected friend prolonged itself. She could make it the more freely as, besides being naturally quick and appreciative, she had always, during her Roman career, in the dear old days (mingled with bitterness as they had been for her), lived with artists, archæologists, ingenious strangers, people who abounded in good talk, threw out ideas and played with them. It came over her that, really, even if things had not come to that particular crisis, Christina's active, various, ironical mind, with all its audacities and impatiences, could not have tolerated for long the simple dullness of the Prince's company. The old lady had said to him, on meeting him, "Of course, what you want to know immediately is whether she has sent you a message. No, my poor friend, I must tell you the truth. I asked her for one, but she told me that she had nothing whatever, of any kind, to say to you. She knew I was coming out to see you. I have n't done so *en cachette*. She does n't like it, but she accepts the necessity, for this once, since you have made the mistake, as she considers it, of approaching her again. We talked about you, last night, after your note came to me — for five minutes: that is, I talked, and Christina was good enough to listen. At the end, she said this (what I shall tell you), with perfect

calmness, and the appearance of being the most reasonable woman in the world. She did n't ask me to repeat it to you, but I do so because it is the only substitute I can offer you for a message. 'I try to occupy my life, my mind, to create interests, in the odious position in which I find myself; I endeavor to get out of myself, my small personal disappointments and troubles, by the aid of such poor faculties as I possess. There are things in the world more interesting, after all, and I hope to succeed in giving my attention to them. It appears to me not too much to ask that the Prince, on his side, should make the same conscientious effort — and leave me alone!' Those were your wife's remarkable words; they are all I have to give you."

After she had given them Madame Grandoni felt a pang of regret; the Prince turned upon her a face so white, bewildered, and wounded. It had seemed to her that they might form a wholesome admonition, but it was now impressed upon her that, as coming from his wife, they were cruel, and she herself felt almost cruel for having repeated them. What they amounted to was an exquisite taunt of his mediocrity — a mediocrity which was, after all, not a crime. How could the Prince occupy himself, what interests could he create, and what faculties, gracious heaven, did he possess? He was as ignorant as a fish, and as narrow as his hat-band. His expression became pitiful; it was as if he dimly measured the insult, felt it more than saw it — felt that he could not plead incapacity without putting the Princess largely in the right. He gazed at Madame Grandoni, his face worked, and for a moment she thought he was going to burst into tears. But he said nothing — perhaps because he was afraid of that — so that suffering silence, during which she gently laid her hand upon his own, remained his only answer. He might, doubtless, do so much he did n't,

that when Christina touched upon this she was unanswerable. The old lady changed the subject: told him what a curious country England was, in so many ways; offered information as to their possible movements during the summer and autumn, which, within a day or two, had become slightly clearer. But at last, abruptly, as if he had not heard her, he inquired, appealingly, who the young man was who had come in the day he called, just as he was going.

Madame Grandoni hesitated a moment. "He was the Princess's bookbinder."

"Her bookbinder? Do you mean her lover?"

"Prince, how can you dream she will ever live with you again?" the old lady asked, in reply to this.

"Why, then, does she have him in her drawing-room — announced like an ambassador, carrying a hat in his hand like mine? Where were his books, his bindings? I should n't say this to her," the Prince added, as if the declaration justified him.

"I told you the other day that she is making studies of the people — the lower orders. The young man you saw is a study." Madame Grandoni could not help laughing out, as she gave her explanation this turn; but her mirth elicited no echo from her interlocutor.

"I have thought that over — over and over; but the more I think the less I understand. Would it be your idea that she is quite crazy? I must tell you I don't care if she is!"

"We are all quite crazy, I think," said Madame Grandoni; "but the Princess no more than the rest of us. No, she must try everything; at present she is trying democracy and socialism."

"*Santo Dio!*" murmured the young man. "And what do they say here when they see her bookbinder?"

"They have n't seen him, and perhaps they won't. But if they do, it won't matter, because here everything

is forgiven. That a person should be singular is all they want. A bookbinder will do as well as anything else."

The Prince mused a while, and then he said, "How can she bear the dirt, the bad smell?"

"I don't know what you are talking about. If you mean the young man you saw at the house (I may tell you, by the way, that it was only the first time he had been there, and that the Princess had only seen him once) — if you mean the little bookbinder, he is n't dirty, especially what we should call. The people of that kind, here, are not like our dear Romans. Every one has a sponge, as big as your head; you can see them in the shops."

"They are full of gin; their faces are purple," said the Prince; after which he immediately asked, "If she had only seen him once, how could he have come into her drawing-room that way?"

The old lady looked at him with a certain severity. "Believe, at least, what I say, my poor friend! Never forget that this was how you spoiled your affairs most of all — by treating a person (and such a person!) as if, as a matter of course, she lied. Christina has many faults, but she has n't that one; that's why I can live with her. She will speak the truth always."

It was plainly not agreeable to the Prince to be reminded so sharply of his greatest mistake, and he flushed a little as Madame Grandoni spoke. But he did not admit his error, and she doubted whether he even perceived it. At any rate, he remarked, rather grandly, like a man who has still a good deal to say for himself, "There are things it is better to conceal."

"It all depends on whether you are afraid. Christina never is. Oh, I admit that she is very strange, and when the entertainment of watching her, to see how she will carry out some of her inspirations, is not stronger than anything else, I lose all patience with her.

When she does n't fascinate she can only exasperate. But, as regards yourself, since you are here, and as I may not see you again for a long time, or perhaps ever (at my age — I'm a hundred and twenty!), I may as well give you the key of certain parts of your wife's conduct. It may make it seem to you a little less fantastic. At the bottom, then, of much that she does is the fact that she is ashamed of having married you."

"Less fantastic!" the young man repeated, staring.

"You may say that there can be nothing more eccentric than that. But you know — or, if not, it is n't for want of her having told you — that the Princess considers that in the darkest hour of her life she sold herself for a title and a fortune. She regards her doing so as such a horrible piece of frivolity that she can never, for the rest of her days, be serious enough to make up for it."

"Yes, I know that she pretends to have been forced. And does she think she's so serious now?"

"The young man you saw the other day thinks so," said the old woman, smiling. "Sometimes she calls it by another name: she says she has thrown herself with passion into being 'modern.' That sums up the greatest number of things that you and your family are not."

"Yes, we are not, thank God! *Dio mio, Dio mio!*" groaned the Prince. He seemed so exhausted by his reflections that he remained sitting in his chair after his companion, lifting her crumpled corpulence out of her own, had proposed that they should walk about a little. She had no ill-nature, but she had already noticed that whenever she was with Christina's husband the current of conversation made her, as she phrased it, bump against him. After administering these small shocks she always steered away, and now, the

Prince having at last got up and offered her his arm, she tried again to talk with him of things he could consider without bitterness. She asked him about the health and habits of his uncles, and he replied, for the moment, with the minuteness which he had been taught that in such a case courtesy demanded; but by the time that, at her request, they had returned to the gate nearest to South Street (she wished him to come no farther) he had prepared a question to which she had not opened the way.

"And who and what, then, is this English captain? About him there is a great deal said."

"This English captain?"

"Godfrey Gerald Cholton — you see I know a good deal about him," said the Prince, articulating the English names with difficulty.

They had stopped near the gate, on the edge of Park Lane, and a couple of predatory hansoms dashed at them from opposite quarters. "I thought that was coming, and at bottom it is he that has occupied you most!" Madame Grandoni exclaimed, with a sigh. "But in reality he is the last one you need trouble about; he does n't count."

"Why does n't he count?"

"I can't tell you — except that some people don't, you know. He does n't even think he does."

"Why not, when she receives him always — lets him go wherever she goes?"

"Perhaps that is just the reason. When people give her a chance to get tired of them she takes it rather easily. At any rate, you need n't be any more jealous of him than you are of me. He's a convenience, a *factotum*, but he works without wages."

"Is n't he, then, in love with her?"

"Naturally. He has, however, no hope."

"Ah, poor gentleman!" said the Prince, lugubriously.

"He accepts the situation better than

you. He occupies himself — as she has strongly recommended him, in my hearing, to do — with other women.”

“Oh, the brute!” the Prince exclaimed. “At all events, he sees her.”

“Yes, but she does n’t see him!” laughed Madame Grandoni, as she turned away.

XIX.

The pink dressing-gown which Pinnie had engaged to make for Rose Muniment became, in Lomax Place, a conspicuous object, supplying poor Amanda with a constant theme for reference to one of the great occasions of her life — her visit to Belgrave Square with Lady Aurora, after their meeting at Rosy’s bedside. She described this episode, vividly, to her companion, repeating a thousand times that her ladyship’s affability was beyond anything she could have expected. The grandeur of the house in Belgrave Square figured in her recital as something oppressive and fabulous, tempered though it had been by shrouds of brown holland and the nudity of staircases and saloons of which the trappings had been put away. “If it’s so noble when they’re out of town, what can it be when they are all there together and everything is out?” she inquired, suggestively; and she permitted herself to be restrictive only on two points, one of which was the state of Lady Aurora’s gloves and bonnet-strings. If she had not been afraid to appear to notice the disrepair of these objects, she would have been so happy to offer to do any little mending. “If she would only come to me every week or two, I would keep up her rank for her,” said Pinnie, with visions of a needle that positively flashed in the disinterested service of the aristocracy. She added that her ladyship got all dragged out with her long expeditions to Lambeth; she might be in tatters, for all they could do to help her, at the top of those dreadful

stairs, with that strange sick creature (she was too unnatural), thinking only of her own finery and talking about her complexion. If she wanted pink, she should have pink; but to Pinnie there was something almost unholy in it, like decking out a corpse, or the next thing to it. This was the other element that left Miss Pynsent cold; it could not be other than difficult for her to enter into the importance her ladyship appeared to attach to those pushing people. The girl was unfortunate, certainly, stuck up there like a kitten on a shelf, but in her ladyship’s place she would have found some topic more in keeping, while they walked about under those tremendous gilded ceilings. Lady Aurora, seeing how she was struck, showed her all over the house, carrying the lamp herself, and telling an old woman who was there — a kind of housekeeper, with ribbons in her cap, who would have pushed Pinnie out if you could push with your eyes — that they would do very well without her. If the pink dressing-gown, in its successive stages of development, filled up the little brown parlor (it was terribly long on the stocks), making such a pervasive rose-colored presence as had n’t been seen there for many a day, this was evidently because it was associated with Lady Aurora, not because it was dedicated to her humble friend.

One day, when Hyacinth came home from his work, Pinnie announced to him, as soon as he entered the room, that her ladyship had been there to look at it — to pass judgment before the last touches were conferred. The dressmaker intimated that in such a case as that her judgment was rather wild, and she had made an embarrassing suggestion about pockets. Whatever could poor Miss Muniment want of pockets, and what had she to put in them? But she had evidently found the garment far beyond anything she expected, and she had been more affable than ever, and had wanted to know about every one in

the Place; not in a meddling, prying way, either, like some of those upper-class visitors, but quite as if the poor people were the high ones, and she was afraid her curiosity might be "presumptuous." It was in the same discreet spirit that she had invited Amanda to relate her whole history, and had expressed an interest in the career of her young friend.

"She said you had charming manners," Miss Pynsent hastened to remark; "but, before heaven, Hyacinth Robinson, I never mentioned a scrap that it could give you pain that any one should talk about." There was an heroic explicitness in this, on Pinnie's part, for she knew in advance just how Hyacinth would look at her—fixedly, silently, hopelessly, as if she were still capable of tattling horribly (with the idea that her revelations would increase her importance), and putting forward this hollow theory of her supreme discretion to cover it up. His eyes seemed to say, "How can I believe you, and yet how can I prove you are lying? I am very helpless, for I can't prove that without applying to the person to whom your incorrigible folly has probably led you to brag, to throw out mysterious and tantalizing hints. You know, of course, that I would never condescend to that." Pinnie suffered, acutely, from this imputation; yet she exposed herself to it often, because she could never deny herself the pleasure, keener still than her pain, of letting Hyacinth know that he was appreciated, admired, and, for those "charming manners" commended by Lady Aurora, even wondered at; and this kind of interest always appeared to imply a suspicion of his secret—something which, when he expressed to himself the sense of it, he called, resenting it at once and yet finding a certain softness in it, "a beastly *attendrissement*." When Pinnie went on to say to him that Lady Aurora appeared to feel a certain surprise at his never yet having

come to Belgrave Square for the famous books, he reflected that he must really wait upon her without more delay, if he wished to keep up his reputation for charming manners; and meanwhile he considered much the extreme oddity of this new phase of his life (it had opened so suddenly, from one day to the other)—a phase in which his society should have become indispensable to ladies of high rank, and the obscurity of his condition only an attraction the more. They were taking him up, then, one after the other, and they were even taking up poor Pinnie, as a means of getting at him; so that he wondered, with humorous bitterness, whether it meant that his destiny was really seeking him out—that the aristocracy, recognizing a mysterious affinity (with that fineness of *flair* for which they were remarkable), were coming to him, to save him the trouble of coming to them.

It was late in the day (the beginning of an October evening), and Lady Aurora was at home. Hyacinth had made a mental calculation of the time at which she would have risen from dinner; the operation of "rising from dinner" having always been, in his imagination, for some reason or other, highly characteristic of the nobility. He was ignorant of the fact that Lady Aurora's principal meal consisted of a scrap of fish and a cup of tea, served on a little stand in the dismantled breakfast-parlor. The door was opened for Hyacinth by the insidious old lady whom Pinnie had described, and who listened to his inquiry, conducted him through the house, and ushered him into her ladyship's presence, without the smallest relaxation of a pair of tightly-closed lips. Hyacinth's hostess was seated in the little breakfast-parlor, by the light of a couple of candles, immersed, apparently, in a collection of tolerably crumpled papers and account-books. She was ciphering, consulting memoranda, taking notes; she had had her head in her hands, and

the silky entanglement of her tresses resisted the rapid effort she made to smooth herself down as she saw the little bookbinder come in. The impression of her fingers remained in little rosy streaks on her pink skin. She exclaimed, instantly, "Oh, you have come about the books — it's so very kind of you;" and she hurried him off to another room, to which, as she explained, she had had them brought down, for him to choose from. The effect of this precipitation was to make him suppose, at first, that she might wish him to execute his errand as quickly as possible and take himself off; but he presently perceived that her nervousness, her shyness, were of an order that would always give false ideas. She wanted him to stay, she wanted to talk with him, and she had rushed with him at the books in order to gain time and composure for exercising some subtler art. Hyacinth stayed half an hour, and became more and more convinced that her ladyship was, as he had ventured to pronounce her on the occasion of their last meeting, a regular saint. He was privately a little disappointed in the books, though he selected three or four, as many as he could carry, and promised to come back for others: they denoted, on Lady Aurora's part, a limited acquaintance with French literature and even a certain puerility of taste. There were several volumes of Lamartine and a set of the spurious memoirs of the Marquise de Créquy; but for the rest the little library consisted mainly of Marmontel and Madame de Genlis, the *Récit d'une Sœur* and the tales of M. Émile Souvestre. There were certain members of an intensely modern school, advanced and scientific realists, of whom Hyacinth had heard and on whom he had long desired to put his hand; but, evidently, none of them had ever stumbled into Lady Aurora's candid collection, though she did possess a couple of Balzac's novels, which, by ill-luck, happened to

be just those that Hyacinth had read again and again.

There was, nevertheless, something very agreeable to him in the moments he passed in the big, dim, cool, empty house, where, at intervals, monumental pieces of furniture — not crowded and miscellaneous, as he had seen the appurtenances of the Princess — loomed and gleamed, and Lady Aurora's fantastic intonations awakened echoes which gave him a sense of privilege, of rioting, decently, in the absence of jealous influences. She talked again about the poor people in the south of London, and about the Muniments in particular; evidently, the only fault she had to find with these latter was that they were not poor enough — not sufficiently exposed to dangers and privations against which she could step in. Hyacinth liked her for this, even though he wished she would talk of something else — he hardly knew what, unless it was that, like Rose Muniment, he wanted to hear more about Inglefield. He did n't mind, with the poor, going into questions of poverty — it even gave him at times a strange, savage satisfaction — but he saw that in discussing them with the rich the interest must inevitably be less; they could never treat them *à fond*. Their mistakes and illusions, their thinking they had got hold of the sensations of the destitute when they had n't at all, would always be more or less irritating. It came over Hyacinth that if he found this want of perspective in Lady Aurora's deep conscientiousness, it would be a queer enough business when he should come to go into the detail of such matters with the Princess Casamassima.

His present hostess said not a word to him about Pinnie, and he guessed that she had an instinctive desire to place him on the footing on which people do not express approbation or surprise at the decency or good-breeding of each other's relatives. He saw that she would always treat him as a gentleman,

and that even if he should be basely ungrateful she would never call his attention to the fact that she had done so. He should not have occasion to say to her, as he had said to the Princess, that she regarded him as a curious animal; and it gave him immediately that sense, always so delightful to him, of learning more about life, to perceive there were such different ways (which implied still a good many more) of being a lady of rank. The manner in which Lady Aurora appeared to wish to confer with him on the great problems of pauperism might have implied that he was a benevolent nobleman (Lord Shaftesbury in person), who had endowed many charities, and was noted, in philanthropic schemes, for his practical sense. It was not less present to him that Pinnie might have tattled, put forward his claims to high consanguinity, than it had been when the dressmaker herself descanted on her ladyship's condescensions; but he remembered now that he too had only just escaped being asinine, when, the other day, he flashed out an allusion to his accursed origin. At all events, he was much touched by the delicacy with which the daughter of the Inglefield comported herself, simply assuming that he was "one of themselves;" and he reflected that if she did know his history (he was sure he might pass twenty years in her society without discovering whether she did or not), this shade of courtesy, this natural tact, coexisting even with extreme awkwardness, illustrated that "best breeding" which he had seen alluded to in novels portraying the aristocracy. The only remark on Lady Aurora's part that savored in the least of looking down at him from a height was when she said, cheerfully, encouragingly, "I suppose that one of these days you will be setting up in business for yourself;" and this was not so cruelly patronizing that he could not reply, with a smile equally free from any sort of impertinence, "Oh dear, no, I shall

never do that. I should make a great mess of any attempt to carry on a business. I have n't a particle of that kind of aptitude."

Lady Aurora looked a little surprised; then she said, "Oh, I see; you don't like — you don't like" — She hesitated: he saw she was going to say that he did n't like the idea of going in, to that extent, for a trade; but he stopped her in time from attributing to him a sentiment so foolish, and declared that what he meant was simply that the only faculty he possessed was the faculty of doing his little piece of work, whatever it was, of liking to do it skillfully and prettily, and of liking still better to get his money for it when it was done. His conception of "business," or of rising in the world, did n't go beyond that. "Oh, yes, I can fancy!" her ladyship exclaimed; but she looked at him a moment with eyes which showed that he puzzled her, that she did n't quite understand his tone. Before he went away she inquired of him, abruptly (nothing had led up to it), what he thought of Captain Sholto, whom she had seen, that other evening, in Audley Court. Did n't Hyacinth think he was very odd? Hyacinth confessed to this impression; whereupon Lady Aurora went on anxiously, eagerly: "Don't you consider that — that — he is decidedly vulgar?"

"How can I know?"

"You can know perfectly — as well as any one!" Then she added, "I think it's a pity they should — a — form relations with any one of that kind."

"They," of course, meant Paul Muniment and his sister. "With a person that may be vulgar?" Hyacinth asked, regarding this solicitude as exquisite. "But think of the people they know — think of those they are surrounded with — think of all Audley Court!"

"The poor, the unhappy, the laboring classes? Oh, I don't call *them* vul-

gar!" cried her ladyship, with radiant eyes. The young man, lying awake a good deal that night, laughed to himself, on his pillow, not unkindly, at her fear that he and his friends would be contaminated by the familiar of a princess. He even wondered whether she would not find the Princess herself rather vulgar.

XX.

It must not be supposed that Hyacinth's relations with Millicent Henning had remained unaffected by the remarkable incident she had witnessed at the theatre. It had made a great impression on the young lady from Pimlico; he never saw her, for several weeks afterwards, that she had not an immense deal to say about it; and though it suited her to take the line of being shocked at the crudity of such proceedings, and of denouncing the Princess for a bold-faced foreigner, of a kind to which any one who knew anything of what could go on in London would give a wide berth, it was easy to see that she was pleased at being brought even into roundabout contact with a person so splendid, and at finding her own discriminating approval of Hyacinth confirmed in such high quarters. She professed to derive her warrant for her low opinion of the lady in the box from information given her by Captain Sholto as he sat beside her — information of which at different moments she gave a different version; her anecdotes having nothing in common, at least, save that they were alike unflattering to the Princess. Hyacinth had many doubts of the captain's pouring such confidences into Miss Henning's ear; under the circumstances it would be such a very unnatural thing for him to do. He *was* unnatural — that was true — and he might have told Millicent, who was capable of having plied him with questions, that his distinguished friend was separated from her

husband; but, for the rest, it was more probable that the girl had given the rein to a certain inventive faculty which she had already showed him she possessed, when it was a question of exercising her primitive, half-childish, half-plebeian impulse of destruction, the instinct of pulling down what was above her, the reckless energy that would, precisely, make her so effective in revolutionary scenes. Hyacinth (it has been mentioned) did not consider that Millicent was false, and it struck him as a proof of positive candor that she should make up absurd, abusive stories about a person concerning whom she knew nothing at all, save that she disliked her, and could not hope for esteem, or, indeed, for recognition of any kind, in return. When people were really false you did n't know where you stood with them, and on such a point as this Miss Henning could never be accused of leaving you in obscurity. She said little else about the captain, and did not pretend to repeat the remainder of his conversation; taking it with an air of grand indifference when Hyacinth amused himself with repaying her strictures on his new acquaintance by drawing a sufficiently derisive portrait of hers.

He took the ground that Sholto's admiration for the high-colored beauty in the second balcony had been at the bottom of the whole episode: he had persuaded the Princess to pretend she was a socialist, and should like, therefore, to confer with Hyacinth, in order that, he might slip into the seat of this too easily deluded youth. At the same time, it never occurred to our young man to conceal the fact that the lady in the box had followed him up; he contented himself with saying that this had been no part of the original plot, but a simple result — not unnatural, after all — of his turning out so much more fascinating than one might have supposed. He narrated, with sportive variations, his visit in South Street, and felt that he would

never feel the need, with his childhood's friend, of glossing over that sort of experience. She might make him a scene of jealousy and welcome — there were things that would have much more terror for him than that; her jealousy, with its violence, its energy, even a certain inconsequent, dare-devil humor that played through it, entertained him, illustrated the frankness, the passion and pluck, that he admired her for. He should never be on the footing of sparing Miss Henning's susceptibilities; how fond she might really be of him he could not take upon himself to say, but her affection would never take the form of that sort of delicacy, and their intercourse was plainly foredoomed to be an exchange of thumps and concussions, of sarcastic shouts and mutual *défis*. He liked her, at bottom, strangely, absurdly; but after all it was only well enough to torment her — she could bear so much — not well enough to spare her. Of there being any justification of her jealousy of the Princess he never thought; it could not occur to him to weigh against each other the sentiments he might excite in such opposed bosoms, or those that the spectacle of either emotion might have kindled in his own. He had, no doubt, his share of fatuity, but he found himself unable to associate, mentally, a great lady and a shop-girl in a contest for a prize which should present analogies with his own personality. How could they have anything in common — even so small a thing as a desire to possess themselves of Hyacinth Robinson? A fact that he did not impart to Millicent, and that he could have no wish to impart to her, was the matter of his pilgrimage to Belgrave Square. He might be in love with the Princess (how could he qualify, as yet, the bewildered emotion she had produced in him?), and he certainly never would conceive a passion for poor Lady Aurora; yet it would have given him pain much greater than any he felt

in the other case, to hear the girl make free with the ministering angel of Audley Court. The difference was, perhaps, somehow in that she appeared really not to touch or arrive at the Princess at all; whereas Lady Aurora was within her compass.

After paying him that visit at his rooms Hyacinth lost sight of Captain Sholto, who had not again reappeared at the Sun and Moon, the little tavern in Bloomsbury which presented so common and casual a face to the world, and yet, in its unsuspected rear, offered a security as yet unimpugned to machinations going down to the very bottom of things. Nothing was more natural than that the captain should be engaged at this season in the recreations of his class; and our young man took for granted that if he were not hanging about the Princess, on that queer footing as to which he himself had a secret hope that he should some day have more light, he was probably ploughing through northern seas on a yacht or creeping after stags in the Highlands; our hero's acquaintance with the light literature of his country being such as to assure him that in one or other of these occupations people of leisure, during the autumn, were necessarily immersed. If the captain were giving his attention to neither, he must have started for Madagascar, or at least for Paris. Happy captain, Hyacinth reflected, while his imagination followed him through all kinds of vivid exotic episodes, and his restless young feet continued to tread, through the stale, flat weeks of September and October, the familiar pavements of Soho and Pentonville, and the shabby sinuous ways which unite these extensive districts. He had told the Princess that he sometimes had a holiday at this period, and that there was a chance of his escorting his respectable companion to the seaside; but as it turned out, at present, the spare cash for such an excursion

was wanting. Hyacinth had indeed, for the moment, an exceptionally keen sense of the absence of this article, and was forcibly reminded that it took a good deal of money to cultivate the society of agreeable women. He not only had not a penny, but he was much in debt, and the explanation of his pinched feeling was in a vague, half-remorseful, half-resigned reference to the numerous occasions when he had had to put his hand in his pocket under penalty of disappointing a young lady whose needs were positive, and, especially, to a certain high crisis (as it might prove to be) in his destiny, when it came over him that one could n't call on a princess just as one was. So, this year, he did not ask old Crookenden for the week which some of the other men took (Eustache Poupin, who had never quitted London since his arrival, launched himself, precisely that summer, supported by his brave wife, into the British unknown, on the strength of a return ticket to Worthing); simply because he would n't know what to do with it. The best way not to spend money, though it was no doubt not the best in the world to make it, was still to take one's daily course to the old familiar, shabby shop, where, as the days shortened and November thickened the air to a livid yellow, the uncovered flame of the gas, burning often from the morning on, lighted up the ugliness amid which the hand of practice endeavored to put together a little beauty — the ugliness of a dingy, belittered interior; of battered, dispapered walls; of work-tables stained and hacked; of windows opening into a foul, drizzling street; of the bared arms, the sordid waistcoat-backs, the smeared aprons, the personal odor, the patient, obstinate, irritating shoulders and vulgar, narrow, inevitable faces, of his fellow-laborers. Hyacinth's relations with his comrades would form a chapter by itself, but all that may be said of the matter here is that the

clever little journeyman from Lomax Place had a kind of double identity, and that much as he lived in Mr. Crookenden's establishment he lived out of it still more. In this busy, pasty, sticky, leathery little world, where wages and beer were the main objects of consideration, he played his part in a manner which caused him to be regarded as a queer lot, but capable of queerness in the line of good-nature too. He had not made good his place there without discovering that the British workman, when animated by the spirit of mirth, has rather a heavy hand, and he tasted of the practical joke in every degree of violence. During his first year he dreamed, with secret passion and suppressed tears, of a day of bliss when at last they would let him alone — a day which arrived in time, for it is always an advantage to be clever, if only one is clever enough. Hyacinth was sufficiently so to have invented a *modus vivendi* in respect to which M. Poupin said to him, "Enfin vous voilà ferme!" (the Frenchman himself, terribly éprouvé at the beginning, had always bristled with firmness and opposed to insular grossness a sonorous dignity), and under the influence of which the scenery of Soho figured as a daily, dusky phantasmagoria, relegated to the mechanical, passive part of experience, and giving no hostages to reality, or at least to ambition, save an insufficient number of shillings on Saturday night, and spasmodic reminiscences of delicate work that might have been more delicate still, as well as of certain applications of the tool which he flattered himself were unsurpassed, unless by the supreme Eustace.

One evening in November, after discharging himself of a considerable indebtedness to Pinnie, he had still a sovereign in his pocket — a sovereign which seemed to spin there at the opposed solicitation of a dozen exemplary uses. He had come out for a walk, with

a vague intention of pushing as far as Audley Court; and lurking within this nebulous design, on which the damp breath of the streets, making objects seem that night particularly dim and places particularly far, had blown a certain chill, was a sense that it would be rather nice to take something to Rose Muniment, who delighted in a sixpenny present, and to whom, for some time, he had not rendered any such homage. At last, after he had wandered a while, hesitating between the pilgrimage to Lambeth and the possibility of still associating his evening in some way or other with that of Miss Henning, he reflected that if a sovereign was to be pulled to pieces it was a simplification to get it changed. He had been traversing the region of Mayfair, partly with the preoccupation of a short cut, and partly from an instinct of self-defense; if one was in danger of spending one's money precipitately, it was so much gained to plunge into a quarter in which, at that hour especially, there were no shops for little bookbinders. Hyacinth's victory, however, was imperfect when it occurred to him to turn into a public house in order to convert his gold into convenient silver. When it was a question of entering these establishments he selected in preference the most decent; he never knew what unpleasant people he might find on the other side of the swinging door. Those which glitter, at intervals, amid the residential gloom of Mayfair partake of the general gentility of the neighborhood, so that Hyacinth was not surprised (he had passed into the compartment marked "private bar") to see but a single drinker leaning against the counter on which, with his request very civilly enunciated, he put down his sovereign. He was surprised, on the other hand, when, glancing up again, he became aware that this solitary drinker was Captain Godfrey Sholto.

"Why, my dear boy, what a remark-

able coincidence!" the captain exclaimed. "For once in five years that I come into a place like this!"

"I don't come in often myself. I thought you were at Madagascar," said Hyacinth.

"Ah, because I have not been at the Sun and Moon? Well, I have been constantly out of town, you know. And then — don't you see what I mean? — I want to be tremendously discreet. That's the way to get on, isn't it? But I dare say you don't believe in my discretion!" Sholto laughed. "What shall I do to make you understand? I say, have a brandy and soda," he continued, as if this might assist Hyacinth's comprehension. He seemed a trifle flurried, and, if it were possible to imagine such a thing of so independent and whimsical a personage, the least bit abashed or uneasy at having been found in such a low place. It was not any lower, after all, than the Sun and Moon. He was dressed on this occasion according to his station, without the pot-hat and the shabby jacket, and Hyacinth looked at him with a sense that a good tailor must really add a charm to life. Our hero was struck more than ever before with his being the type of man whom, as he strolled about, observing people, he had so often regarded with wonder and envy — the sort of man of whom one said to one's self that he was the "finest white," feeling that he had the world in his pocket. Sholto requested the bar-maid to please not dawdle in preparing the brandy and soda, which Hyacinth had thought to ease off the situation by accepting: this, indeed, was perhaps what the finest white would naturally do. And when the young man had taken the glass from the counter Sholto appeared to encourage him not to linger as he drank it, and smiled down at him very kindly and amusedly, as if the combination of a very small booz binder and a big tumbler were sufficiently droll.

The captain took time, however, to ask Hyacinth how he had spent his autumn and what was the news in Bloomsbury; he further inquired about those delightful people over the river. "I can't tell you what an impression they made upon me — that evening, you know." After this he remarked to Hyacinth, suddenly, irrelevantly, "And so you are just going to stay on for the winter, quietly?" Our young man stared: he wondered what other project any one could attribute to him; he could not reflect, immediately, that this was the sort of thing the finest whites said to each other when they met, after their fashionable dispersals, and that his friend had only been guilty of a momentary inadvertence. In point of fact, the captain recovered himself: "Oh, of course you have got your work, and that sort of thing;" and, as Hyacinth did not succeed in swallowing at a gulp the contents of his big tumbler, he asked him presently whether he had heard anything from the Princess. Hyacinth replied that he could have no news except what the captain might be good enough to give him; but he added that he did go to see her just before she left town.

"Ah, you did go to see her? That's quite right — quite right."

"I went because she, very kindly, wrote to me to come."

"Ah, she wrote to you to come?" The captain fixed Hyacinth for a moment with his curious, colorless eyes. "Do you know you are a devilish privileged mortal?"

"Certainly, I know that." Hyacinth blushed and felt foolish; the bar-maid, who had heard this odd couple talking about a princess, was staring at him too, with her elbows on the counter.

"Do you know there are people who would give their heads that she should write to them to come?"

"I have no doubt of it whatever!" Hyacinth exclaimed, taking refuge in a laugh which did not sound as natural as

he would have liked, and wondering whether his interlocutor were not, precisely, one of these people. In this case the bar-maid might well stare; for deeply convinced as our young man might be that he was the son of Lord Frederick Purvis, there was really no end to the oddity of his being preferred — and by a princess — to Captain Sholto. If anything could have reinforced, at that moment, his sense of this anomaly, it would have been the indescribably gentlemanly way, implying all sorts of common imitations, in which his companion went on.

"Ah, well, I see you know how to take it! And if you are in correspondence with her, why do you say that you can hear from her only through me? My dear fellow, I am not in correspondence with her. You might think I would naturally be, but I am not." He added, as Hyacinth had laughed again, in a manner that might have passed for ambiguous, "So much the worse for me — is that what you mean?" Hyacinth replied that he himself had had the honor of hearing from the Princess only once, and he mentioned that she had told him that her letter-writing came only in fits, when it was sometimes very profuse; there were months together that she didn't touch a pen. "Oh, I can imagine what she told you!" the captain exclaimed. "Look out for the next fit! She is visiting about. It's a great thing to be in the same house with her — an immense comedy." He remarked that he had heard, now he remembered, that she either had taken, or was thinking of taking, a house in the country for a few months, and he added that if Hyacinth did n't propose to finish his brandy and soda they might as well turn out. Hyacinth's thirst had been very superficial, and as they turned out the captain observed, by way of explanation of his having been found in a public house (it was the only attempt of this kind he made), that any friend

of his would always know him by his love of curious, out-of-the-way nooks. "You must have noticed that," he said, — "my taste for exploration. If I had n't explored, I never should have known you, should I? That was rather a nice little girl in there; did you twig her figure? It's a pity they always have such beastly hands." Hyacinth, instinctively, had made a motion to go southward, but Sholto, passing a hand into his arm, led him the other way. The house they had quitted was near a corner, which they rounded, the captain pushing forward as if there were some reason for haste. His haste was checked, however, by an immediate collision with a young woman who, coming in the opposite direction, turned the angle as briskly as themselves. At this moment the captain gave Hyacinth a great jerk, but not before he had caught a glimpse of the young woman's face — it seemed to flash upon him out of the dusk — and given quick voice to his surprise.

"Hallo, Millicent!" This was the simple cry that escaped from his lips, while the captain, still going on, inquired, "What's the matter? Who's your pretty friend?" Hyacinth declined to go on, and repeated Miss Henning's baptismal name so loudly that the young woman, who had passed them without looking back, was obliged to stop. Then Hyacinth saw that he was not mistaken, though Millicent gave no audible response. She stood looking at him, with her head very high, and he approached her, disengaging himself from Sholto, who, however, hung back only an instant before joining them. Hyacinth's heart had suddenly begun to beat very fast; there was a sharp shock in the girl's turning up in just that place at that moment. Yet when she began to laugh, abruptly, with violence, and to ask him why he was looking at her as if she were a kicking horse, he recognized that there was nothing so very extraordinary, after all, in a casual meet-

ing between persons who were such frequenters of the London streets. Millicent had never concealed the fact that she "trotted about," on various errands, at night; and once, when he had said to her that the less a respectable young woman took the evening air alone the better for her respectability, she had asked how respectable he thought she pretended to be, and had remarked that if he would make her a present of a brougham, or even call for her three or four times a week in a cab, she would doubtless preserve more of the precious quality. She could turn the tables quickly enough, and she exclaimed, now, professing, on her own side, great astonishment —

"What are you prowling about here for? You're after no good, I'll be bound!"

"Good evening, Miss Henning; what a jolly meeting!" said the captain, removing his hat with a humorous flourish.

"Oh, how d'ye do?" Millicent returned, as if she did not immediately place him.

"Where were you going so fast? What are you doing?" asked Hyacinth, who had looked from one to the other.

"Well, I never did see such a manner — from one that knocks about like *you*!" cried Miss Henning. "I'm going to see a friend of mine who's a lady's maid in Curzon Street. Have you anything to say to that?"

"Don't tell us — don't tell us!" Sholto interposed, after she had spoken (she had not hesitated an instant). "I, at least, disavow the indiscretion. Where may not a charming woman be going when she trips with a light foot through the gathering dusk?"

"I say, what are you talking about?" the girl inquired, with dignity, of Hyacinth's companion. She spoke as if with a resentful suspicion that her foot was not light.

"On what errand of mercy, of secret tenderness?" the captain went on, laughing.

"Secret yourself!" cried Millicent. "Do you two always hunt in couples?"

"All right, we'll turn round and go with you as far as your friend's," Hyacinth said.

"All right," Millicent replied.

"All right," the captain added; and the three took their way together in the direction of Curzon Street. They walked for a few moments in silence, though the captain whistled, and then Millicent suddenly turned to Hyacinth:—

"You haven't told me where *you* were going, yet."

"We met in that public house," the captain said, "and we were each so ashamed of being found in such a place by the other that we tumbled out together, without much thinking what we should do with ourselves."

"When he's out with me he pretends he can't abide them houses," Miss Henning declared. "I wish I had looked in that one, to see who was there."

"Well, she's rather nice," the captain went on. "She told me her name was Georgiana."

"I went to get a piece of money changed," Hyacinth said, with a sense that there was a certain dishonesty in the air; glad that he, at least, could afford to speak the truth.

"To get your grandmother's night-cap changed! I recommend you to keep your money together—you've none too much of it!" Millicent exclaimed.

"Is that the reason you are playing me false?" Hyacinth flashed out. He had been thinking, with still intentness, as they walked; at once nursing and wrestling with a kindled suspicion. He was pale with the idea that he was being bamboozled; yet he was able to say to himself that one must allow, in life, for the element of coincidence, and that he might easily put himself immensely in the wrong by making a groundless charge. It was only later that he pieced his impressions together, and saw them

—as it appeared—justify each other; at present, as soon as he had uttered it, he was almost ashamed of his quick retort to Millicent's taunt. He ought, at least, to have waited to see what Curzon Street would bring forth.

The girl broke out upon him immediately, repeating, "False, false?" with high derision, and wanting to know whether that was the way to knock a lady about in public. She had stopped short on the edge of a crossing, and she went on, with a voice so uplifted that he was glad they were in a street that was rather empty at such an hour: "You're a pretty one to talk about falsity, when a woman has only to leer at you out of an opera-box!"

"Don't say anything about *her*," the young man interposed, trembling.

"And pray why not about 'her,' I should like to know? You don't pretend she's a decent woman, I suppose!" Millicent's laughter rang through the quiet neighborhood.

"My dear fellow, you know you *have* been to her," Captain Sholto remarked, smiling.

Hyacinth turned upon him, staring, at once challenged and baffled by his ambiguous part in an incident it was doubtless possible to magnify, but it was not possible to treat as perfectly simple. "Certainly, I have been to the Princess Casamassima, thanks to you. When you came and begged me, when you dragged me, do you make it a reproach? Who the devil are you, any way, and what do you want of me?" our hero cried, his mind flooded in a moment with everything in the captain that had puzzled him and eluded him. This swelling tide obliterated on the spot everything that had entertained and gratified him.

"My dear fellow, whatever I am, I am not an ass," this gentleman replied, with imperturbable good-humor. "I don't reproach you with anything. I only wanted to put in a word as a peace-

maker. My good friends — my good friends,” and he laid a hand, in his practiced way, on Hyacinth’s shoulder, while, with the other pressed to his heart, he bent on the girl a face of gallantry which had something paternal in it, “I am determined this absurd misunderstanding shall end as lovers’ quarrels ought always to end.”

Hyacinth withdrew himself from the captain’s touch, and said to Millicent, “You are not really jealous of — of any one. You pretend that, only to throw dust in my eyes.”

To this sally Miss Henning returned him an answer which promised to be lively, but the captain swept it away in the profusion of his protests. He pronounced them a dear, delightful, abominable young couple; he declared it was most interesting to see how, in people of their sort, the passions lay near the surface; he almost pushed them into each other’s arms; and he wound up by proposing that they should all terminate their little differences by proceeding together to the Pavilion music hall, the nearest place of entertainment in that neighborhood, leaving the lady’s maid in Curzon Street to dress her mistress’s wig in peace. He has been presented to the reader as an accomplished man, and it will doubtless be felt that the picture is justified when I relate that he placed this idea in so attractive a light that his companions finally entered a hansom with him, and rattled toward the haunt of pleasure, Hyacinth sandwiched, on the edge of the seat, between the others. Two or three times his ears burned; he felt that if there was an understanding between them they had now, behind him, a rare opportunity for carrying it out. If it was at his expense, the whole evening constituted for them, indeed, an opportunity, and this thought rendered his diversion but scantily absorbing, though at the Pavilion the captain engaged a private box and ordered ices to be brought in. Hyacinth

cared so little for his little pink pyramid that he suffered Millicent to consume it after she had disposed of her own. It was present to him, however, that if he should make a fool of himself the folly would be of a very gross kind, and this is why he withheld a question which rose to his lips repeatedly — a disposition to inquire of his entertainer why the mischief he had hurried him so out of the public house, if he had not been waiting there, preconceredly, for Millicent. We know that in Hyacinth’s eyes one of this young lady’s compensatory merits had been that she was not deceitful, and he asked himself if a girl could change, that way, from one month to the other. This was optimistic, but, all the same, he reflected, before leaving the Pavilion, that he could see quite well what Lady Aurora meant by thinking Captain Sholto vulgar.

XXI.

Paul Muniment had fits of silence, while the others were talking; but on this occasion he had not opened his lips for half an hour. When he talked Hyacinth listened, almost holding his breath; and when he said nothing Hyacinth watched him fixedly, listening to the others only through the medium of his candid countenance. At the Sun and Moon Muniment paid very little attention to his young friend, doing nothing that should cause it to be perceived they were particular pals; and Hyacinth even thought, at moments, that he was bored or irritated by the serious manner in which the little bookbinder could not conceal from the world that he took him. He wondered whether this were a system, a calculated prudence, on Muniment’s part, or only a manifestation of that superior brutality, latent in his composition, which never had an intention of unkindness, but was naturally intolerant of palaver. There was plen-

ty of palaver at the Sun and Moon; there were nights when a blast of imbecility seemed to blow over the place, and one felt ashamed to be associated with so much insistent ignorance and panting vanity. Then every one, with two or three exceptions, made an ass of himself, thumping the table and repeating over some inane phrase which appeared for the hour to constitute the whole furniture of his mind. There were men who kept saying, "Them was my words in the month of February last, and what I say I stick to — what I say I stick to;" and others who perpetually inquired of the company, "And what the plague am I to do with seventeen shillings — with seventeen shillings? What am I to do with them — will ye tell me that?" an interrogation which, in truth, usually ended by eliciting a ribald reply. There were still others who remarked, to satiety, that if it was not done to-day it would have to be done to-morrow, and several who constantly proclaimed their opinion that the only way was to pull up the Park rails again — just to pluck them straight up. A little shoemaker, with red eyes and a grayish face, whose appearance Hyacinth deplored, scarcely ever expressed himself but in the same form of words: "Well, are we in earnest, or ain't we in earnest? — that's the thing I want to know." He was terribly in earnest himself, but this was almost the only way he had of showing it; and he had much in common (though they were always squabbling) with a large, red-faced man, of uncertain attributes and stertorous breathing, who was understood to know a good deal about dogs, had fat hands, and wore on his forefinger a big silver ring, containing some one's hair (Hyacinth believed it to be that of a terrier, snappish in life). He had always the same refrain: "Well, now, are we just starving, or ain't we just starving? I should like the v'ice of the company on that question."

When the tone fell as low as this Paul Muniment held his peace, except that he whistled a little, leaning back, with his hands in his pockets and his eyes on the table. Hyacinth often supposed him to be on the point of breaking out and letting the company know what he thought of them — he had a perfectly clear vision of what he must think: but Muniment never compromised his popularity to that degree; he judged it — this he once told Hyacinth — too valuable an instrument, and cultivated the faculty of patience, which had the advantage of showing one more and more that one must do one's thinking for one's self. His popularity, indeed, struck Hyacinth as rather an uncertain quantity, and the only mistake he had seen a symptom of on his friend's part was a tendency to overestimate it. Muniment thought many of their colleagues asinine, but it was Hyacinth's belief that he himself knew still better how asinine they were; and this inadequate conception supported, in some degree, on Paul's part, his theory of his influence — an influence that would be stronger than any other on the day he should choose to exert it. Hyacinth only wished that day would come; it would not be till then, he was sure, that they would all know where they were, and that the good they were striving for, blindly, obstructedly, in a kind of eternal dirty intellectual fog, would pass from the stage of crude discussion and mere sharp, tantalizing desirableness into that of irresistible reality. Muniment was listened to unanimously, when he spoke, and was much talked about, usually with a knowing, implicit allusiveness, when he was absent; it was generally admitted that he could see further than most. But it was suspected that he wanted to see further than was necessary; as one of the most inveterate frequenters of the club remarked one evening, if a man could see as far as he could chuck a brick, that was far enough.

There was an idea that he had nothing particular to complain of, personally, or that if he had he did n't complain of it — an attitude which perhaps contained the germs of a latent disaffection. Hyacinth could easily see that he himself was exposed to the same imputation, but he could n't help it; it would have been impossible to him to keep up his character for sincerity by revealing, at the Sun and Moon, the condition of his wardrobe, or announcing that he had not had a morsel of bacon for six months. There were members of the club who were apparently always in the enjoyment of involuntary leisure — narrating the vainest peregrinations in search of a job, the cruellest rebuffs, the most vivid anecdotes of the insolence of office. They made Hyacinth uncomfortably conscious, at times, that if *he* should be out of work it would be wholly by his own fault; that he had in his hand a bread-winning tool on which he might absolutely count. He was also aware, however, that his position in this little band of malcontents (it was little only if measured by the numbers that were gathered together on any one occasion; he liked to think it was large in its latent possibilities, its mysterious ramifications and affiliations) was peculiar and distinguished; it would be favorable if he had the kind of energy and assurance that would help him to make use of it. He had an intimate conviction — the proof of it was in the air, in the sensible facility of his footing at the Sun and Moon — that Eustache Poupin had taken upon himself to disseminate the anecdote of his origin, of his mother's disaster; in consequence of which, as the victim of social infamy, of heinous laws, it was conceded to him that he had a larger account to settle even than most. He was *ab ovo* a revolutionist, and that balanced against his smart neckties, a certain suspicious security that was perceived in him as to the *h* (he had had from his earliest years a

natural command of it), and the fact that he possessed the sort of hand on which there is always a premium — an accident somehow to be guarded against in a thorough-going system of equality. He never challenged Poupin on the subject, for he owed the Frenchman too much to reproach him with any officious step that was meant in kindness; and moreover, his fellow-laborer at old Crookenden's had said to him, as if to anticipate such an impugnement of his discretion, "Remember, my child, that I am incapable of drawing aside any veil that you may have preferred to drop over your lacerated personality. Your moral dignity will always be safe with me. But remember at the same time that among the disinherited there is a mystic language which dispenses with proofs — a freemasonry, a reciprocal divination; they understand each other with half a word." It was with half a word, then, in Bloomsbury, that Hyacinth had been understood; but there was a certain delicacy within him that forbade him to push his advantage, to treat implications of sympathy, none the less definite for being roundabout, as steps in the ladder of success. He had no wish to be a leader because his mother had murdered her lover and died in penal servitude: these circumstances recommended intentness, but they also suggested modesty. When the gathering at the Sun and Moon was at its best, and its temper seemed really an earnest of what was the basis of all its calculations — that the people was only a sleeping lion, already breathing shorter and beginning to stretch its limbs — at these hours, some of them thrilling enough, Hyacinth waited for the voice that should allot to him the particular part he was to play. His ambition was to play it with brilliancy, to offer an example — an example, even, that might survive him — of pure youthful, almost juvenile, consecration. He was conscious of no commission to give the

promises, to assume the responsibilities, of a redeemer, and he had no envy of the man on whom this burden should rest. Muniment, indeed, might carry it, and it was the first article of his faith that, to help him to carry it the better, he himself was ready for any sacrifice. Then it was — on these nights of intenser vibration — that Hyacinth waited for a sign.

They came oftener, this second winter, for the season was terribly hard; and as, in that lower world, one walked with one's ear nearer the ground, the deep perpetual groan of London misery seemed to swell and swell, and form the whole undertone of life. The filthy air came into the place in the damp coats of silent men, and hung there till it was brewed to a nauseous warmth, and ugly, serious faces squared themselves through it, and strong-smelling pipes contributed their element in a fierce, dogged manner which appeared to say that it now had to stand for everything — for bread and meat and beer, for shoes and blankets and the poor things at the pawnbroker's and the smokeless chimney at home. Hyacinth's colleagues seemed to him wiser then, and more permeated with intentions boding ill to the satisfied classes; and though the note of popularity was still most effectively struck by the man who could demand oftenest, unpractically, "What the plague am I to do with seventeen shillings?" it was brought home to our hero on more than one occasion that revolution was ripe at last. This was especially the case on the evening I began by referring to, when Eustache Poupin squeezed in and announced, as if it were a great piece of news, that in the east of London, that night, there were forty thousand men out of work. He looked round the circle with his dilated foreign eye, as he took his place; he seemed to address the company individually as well as collectively, and to make each man respon-

sible for hearing him. He owed his position, at the Sun and Moon, to the brilliancy with which he represented the political exile, the magnanimous, immaculate citizen wrenched out of bed at dead of night, torn from his hearthstone, his loved ones, and his profession, and hurried across the frontier with only the coat on his back. Poupin had performed in this character now for many years, but he had never lost the bloom of the outraged proscrip, and the passionate pictures he had often drawn of the bitterness of exile were moving even to those who knew with what success he had set up his household gods in Lisson Grove. He was recognized as suffering everything for his opinions; and his hearers in Bloomsbury — who, after all, even in their most concentrated hours, were very good-natured — appeared never to have made the subtle reflection, though they made many others, that there was a want of tact in his calling upon them to sympathize with him for being one of themselves. He imposed himself by the eloquence of his assumption that if one were not in the beautiful France one was nowhere worth speaking of, and ended by producing an impression that that country had an almost supernatural charm. Muniment had once said to Hyacinth that he was sure Poupin would be very sorry if he should be enabled to go home again, for over there he could n't be a refugee; and however this might be, he certainly flourished a good deal in London on the basis of this very fact that he ought n't to be there.

"Why do you tell us that, as if it were so very striking? Don't we know it, and haven't we known it always? But you are right; we behave as if we knew nothing at all," said the German cabinet-maker, who had originally introduced Captain Sholto to the Sun and Moon. He had a long, unhealthy, benevolent face and greasy hair, and constantly wore a kind of untidy band-

age round his neck, as if for a local ailment. "You remind us—that is very well; but we shall forget it in half an hour. We are not serious."

"*Pardon, pardon*; for myself, I do not admit that!" Poupin replied, striking the table with his finger-tips several times, very fast. "If I am not serious, I am nothing."

"Oh no, you are something," said the German, smoking his monumental pipe with a contemplative air. "We are all something; but I am not sure it is anything very useful."

"Well, things would be worse without us. I'd rather be in here, in *this* kind of muck, than outside," remarked the fat man, who understood dogs.

"Certainly, it is very pleasant, especially if you have your beer; but not so pleasant in the east, where fifty thousand people starve. It is a very unpleasant night," the cabinet-maker went on.

"How can it be worse?" Eustache Poupin inquired, looking defiantly at the German, as if to make him responsible for the fat man's reflection. "It is so bad that the imagination recoils, refuses."

"Oh, we don't care for the imagination!" the fat man declared. "We want a compact body, in marching order."

"What do you call a compact body?" the little gray-faced shoemaker demanded. "I dare say you don't mean your kind of body."

"Well, I know what I mean," said the fat man, severely.

"That's a grand thing. Perhaps one of these days you'll tell us."

"You'll see it for yourself, perhaps, before that day comes," the gentleman with the silver ring rejoined. "Perhaps when you do, you'll remember."

"Well, you know, Schinkel says we don't," said the shoemaker, nodding at the cloud-compelling German.

"I don't care what no man says!"

the dog-fancier exclaimed, gazing straight before him.

"They say it's a bad year—the blockheads in the newspapers," Mr. Schinkel went on, addressing himself to the company at large. "They say that on purpose—to convey the impression that there are such things as good years. I ask the company, has any gentleman present ever happened to notice that article? The good year is yet to come: it might begin to-night, if we like; it all depends on our being able to be serious for a few hours. But that is too much to expect. Mr. Muniment is very serious; he looks as if he were waiting for the signal; but he doesn't speak—he never speaks, if I want particularly to hear him. He only considers, very deeply, I am sure. But it is almost as bad to think without speaking as to speak without thinking."

Hyacinth always admired the cool, easy way in which Muniment comported himself when the attention of the public was directed towards him. These manifestations of curiosity, or of hostility, would have put him out immensely, himself. When a lot of people, especially the kind of people who were collected at the Sun and Moon, looked at him, or listened to him, at once, he always blushed and stammered, feeling that if he could n't have a million of spectators (which would have been inspiring) he should prefer to have but two or three; there was something very embarrassing in twenty.

Muniment smiled, for an instant, good-humoredly; then, after a moment's hesitation, looking across at the German, and the German only, as if his remark were worth noticing, but it did n't matter if the others did n't understand the reply, he said simply, "Hoffendahl's in London."

"Hoffendahl? Lieber Gott!" the cabinet-maker exclaimed, taking the pipe out of his mouth. And the two men exchanged a longish glance. Then Mr.

Schinkel remarked, "That surprises me *sehr*. Are you very sure?"

Muniment continued, for a moment, to look at him. "If I keep quiet for half an hour, with so many valuable suggestions flying all round me, you think I say too little. Then if I open my head to give out three words, you appear to think I say too much."

"Ah, no; on the contrary, I want you to say three more. If you tell me you have seen him I shall be perfectly satisfied."

"Upon my word, I should hope so! Do you think he's the kind of party a fellow says he has seen?"

"Yes, when he has n't!" said Eustache Poupin, who had been listening. Every one was listening now.

"It depends on the fellow he says it to. Not even here?" the German asked.

"Oh, here!" Paul Muniment exclaimed, in a peculiar tone, and resumed his muffled whistle again.

"Take care — take care; you will make me think you haven't!" cried Poupin, with his excited expression.

"That's just what I want," said Muniment.

"*Nun*, I understand," the cabinet-maker remarked, restoring his pipe to his lips after an interval almost as momentous as the stoppage of a steamer in mid-ocean.

"*Ere*, 'ere?" repeated the small shoemaker, indignantly. "I dare say it's as good as the place he came from. He might look in and see what he thinks of it."

"That's a place you might tell us a little about, now," the fat man suggested, as if he had been waiting for his chance.

Before the shoemaker had time to notice this challenge some one inquired, with a hoarse petulance, who the blazes they were talking about; and Mr. Schinkel took upon himself to reply that they were talking about a man who had n't

done what he had done by simply exchanging abstract ideas, however valuable, with his friends in a respectable pot-house.

"What the devil has he done, then?" some one else demanded; and Muniment replied, quietly, that he had spent twelve years in a Prussian prison, and was consequently still an object of a good deal of interest to the police.

"Well, if you call that very useful, I must say I prefer a pot-house!" cried the shoemaker, appealing to all the company, and looking, as it appeared to Hyacinth, particularly hideous.

"*Doch, doch*, it is useful," the German remarked, philosophically, among his yellow clouds.

"Do you mean to say you are not prepared for that, yourself?" Muniment inquired of the shoemaker.

"Prepared for that? I thought we were going to smash that sort of shop altogether; I thought that was the main part of the job."

"They will smash best, those who have been inside," the German declared; "unless, perhaps, they are broken, enervated. But Hoffendahl is not enervated."

"Ah, no; no smashing, no smashing," Muniment went on. "We want to keep them standing, and even to build a few more; but the difference will be that we shall put the correct sort in."

"I take your idea — that Griffin is one of the correct sort," the fat man remarked, indicating the shoemaker.

"I thought we was going to 'ave their 'eads — all that bloomin' lot!" Mr. Griffin declared, protesting; while Eustache Poupin began to enlighten the company as to the great Hoffendahl, one of the purest martyrs of their cause, a man who had been through everything — who had been scarred and branded, tortured, almost flayed, and had never given them the names they wanted to have. Was it possible they did n't remember that great combined attempt,

early in the fifties, which took place in four Continental cities at once, and which, in spite of every effort to smother it up — there had been editors and journalists transported even for hinting at it — had done more for the social question than anything before or since? “Through him being served in the manner you describe?” some one asked, with plainness; to which Poupin replied that it was one of those failures that are more glorious than any success. Muniment said that the affair had been only a flash in the pan, but that the great value of it was this — that whereas some forty persons (and of both sexes) had been engaged in it, only one had been seized and had suffered. It had been Hoffendahl himself who was bagged. Certainly he had suffered much, he had suffered for every one; but from that point of view — that of the economy of material — the thing had been a rare success.

“Do you know what I call the others? I call ’em bloody sneaks!” the fat man cried; and Eustache Poupin, turning to Muniment, expressed the hope that he did n’t really approve of such a solution — did n’t consider that an economy of heroism was an advantage to any cause. He himself esteemed Hoffendahl’s attempt because it had shaken, more than it had been shaken since the French Revolution, the rotten fabric of the actual social order, and because that very fact of the impunity, the invisibility, of the persons concerned in it had given the predatory classes, had given all Europe, a shudder that had not yet subsided; but for his part, he must regret that some of the associates of the devoted victim had not come forward and insisted on sharing with him his tortures and his captivity.

“C’aurait été d’un bel exemple!” said the Frenchman, with an impressive moderation of statement which made even those who could not understand him see that he was saying something fine; while the cabinet-maker remarked

that in Hoffendahl’s place any of them would have stood out just the same. He did n’t care if they set it down to self-love (Mr. Schinkel called it “loaf”), but he might say that he himself would have done so if he had been trusted and had been seized.

“I want to have it all drawn up clear first; then I’ll go in,” said the fat man, who seemed to think it was expected of him to be reassuring.

“Well, who the dickens is to draw it up, eh? That’s what we happen to be talking about,” returned his antagonist the shoemaker.

“A fine example, old man? Is that your idea of a fine example?” Muniment, with his amused face, asked of Poupin. “A fine example of asininity! Are there capable people, in such plenty, about the place?”

“Capable of greatness of soul, I grant you not.”

“Your greatness of soul is usually greatness of blundering. A man’s foremost duty is not to get bagged. If you want to show you’re solid, that’s the way.”

At this Hyacinth suddenly felt himself moved to speak. “But some one must be caught, always, must he not? Has n’t some one always been?”

“Oh, I dare say you’ll be, if you like it!” Muniment replied, without looking at him. “If they succeed in potting you, do as Hoffendahl did, and do it as a matter of course; but if they don’t, make it your supreme duty, make it your religion, to lie close and keep yourself for another go. The world is full of unclean beasts whom I shall be glad to see shoveled away by the thousand; but when it’s a question of honest men and men of courage, I protest against the idea that two should be sacrificed where one will serve.”

“Trop d’arithmétique — trop d’arithmétique! That is fearfully English!” Poupin cried.

“No doubt, no doubt; what else

should it be? You shall never share my fate, if I have a fate, and I can prevent it!" said Muniment, laughing.

Eustache Poupin stared at him and his merriment, as if he thought the English frivolous as well as calculating; then he rejoined, "If I suffer, I trust it may be for suffering humanity, but I trust it may also be for France."

"Oh, I hope you ain't going to suffer any more for France," said Mr. Griffin. "Has n't it done that insatiable old country of yours some good, by this time, all you've had to put up with?"

"Well, I want to know what Hoffendahl has come over for; it's very kind of him, I'm sure. What is he going to do for *us*? — that's what *I* want to know," remarked in a loud, argumentative tone a personage at the end of the table most distant from Muniment's place. His name was Delancey, and he gave himself out as holding a position in a manufactory of soda-water; but Hyacinth had a secret belief that he was really a hairdresser — a belief connected with a high, lustrous curl, or crest, which he wore on the summit of his large head, and the manner in which he thrust over his ear, as if it were a barber's comb, the pencil with which he was careful to take notes of the discussions carried on at the Sun and Moon. His opinions were distinct and frequently expressed; he had a watery (Muniment had once called it a soda-watery) eye, and a personal aversion to a lord. He desired to change everything except religion, of which he approved.

Muniment answered that he was unable to say, as yet, what the German revolutionist had come to England for, but that he hoped to be able to give some information on the matter the next time they should meet. It was very certain Hoffendahl had n't come for nothing, and he would undertake to declare that they would all feel, within a short time, that he had given a lift to the cause they were interested in. He had had a great

experience, and they might very well find it useful to consult. If there was a way for them, then and there, he was sure to know the way. "I quite agree with the majority of you — as I take it to be," Muniment went on, with his fresh, cheerful, reasonable manner — "I quite agree with you that the time has come to settle upon it and to follow it. I quite agree with you that the actual state of things is" — he paused a moment, and then went on in the same pleasant tone — "is hellish."

These remarks were received with a differing demonstration: some of the company declaring that if the Dutchman cared to come round and smoke a pipe they would be glad to see him — perhaps he'd show where the thumb-screws had been put on; others being strongly of the opinion that they did n't want any more advice — they had already had advice enough to turn a donkey's stomach. What they wanted was to put forth their might without any more palaver; to do something, or for some one; to go out somewhere and smash something, on the spot — why not? — that very night. While they sat there and talked, there were about half a million of people in London that did n't know where the *h* — the morrow's meal was to come from; what they wanted to do, unless they were just a collection of abominable wind-bags, was to show them where to get it, to take it to them with heaped-up hands. Hyacinth listened, with a divided attention, to interlaced iterations, while the talk blew hot and cold; there was a genuine emotion, to-night, in the rear of the Sun and Moon, and he felt the contagion of excited purpose. But he was following a train of his own; he was wondering what Muniment had in reserve (for he was sure he was only playing with the company), and his imagination, quickened by the sense of impending relations with the heroic Hoffendahl and the discussion as to the alternative duty of es-

caping or of facing one's fate, had launched itself into possible perils — into the idea of how he might, in a given case, settle for himself that question of paying for the lot. The loud, contradictory, vain, unpractical babble went on about him, but he was definitely conscious only that the project of breaking into the bakers' shops was well before the assembly, and was receiving a vigorous treatment, and that there was likewise a good deal of reference to the butchers and grocers, and even to the fishmongers. He was in a state of inward exaltation; he was seized by an intense desire to stand face to face with the sublime Hoffendahl, to hear his voice, to touch his mutilated hand. He was ready for anything: he knew that he himself was safe to breakfast and dine, poorly but sufficiently, and that his colleagues were perhaps even more crude and clumsy than usual; but a breath of popular passion had passed over him, and he seemed to see, immensely magnified, the monstrosity of the great ulcers and sores of London — the sick, eternal misery crying, in the darkness, in vain, confronted with granaries and treasure-houses and places of delight, where shameless satiety kept guard. In such a mood as this Hyacinth felt that there was no need to consider, to reason: the facts themselves were as imperative as the cry of the drowning; for while pedantry gained time, did n't starvation rage? He knew that Muniment disapproved of delay, that he held the day had come for a forcible rectification of horrible inequalities. In the last conversation they had had together, his chemical friend had given him a more definite warrant than he had ever done before for numbering him in the party of immediate action, though indeed he remarked, on this occasion, once more, that that particular formula which the little bookbinder appeared to have taken such a fancy to was mere gibberish. He hated that sort of little pretentious label; it was fit only for

politicians. None the less, he had been as plain as possible on the point that their game must be now to frighten society, and frighten it effectually; to make it believe that the swindled classes were at last fairly in league — had really grasped the idea that, closely combined, they would be irresistible. They were not in league, and they had n't in their totality grasped any idea at all. Muniment was not slow to make that equally plain. All the same, society was scareable, and every great scare was a gain for the people. If Hyacinth had needed warrant to-night for a faith that transcended logic, he would have found it in his recollection of this quiet profession; but his friend's words came back to him mainly to make him wonder what that friend had in his head just now. He took no part in the violence of the talk; he had called Schinkel to come round and sit beside him, and the two appeared to confer together in comfortable absorption, while the brown atmosphere grew denser, the passing to and fro of fire-brands more lively, and the flush of faces more portentous. What Hyacinth would have liked to know most of all was why Muniment had not mentioned to him, first, that Hoffendahl was in London, and that he had seen him; for he *had* seen him, though he had dodged Schinkel's question — of that Hyacinth instantly felt sure. He would ask for more information later; and meanwhile he wished, without resentment, but with a certain helpless, patient longing, that Muniment would treat him with a little more confidence. If there were a secret in regard to Hoffendahl (and there evidently was: Muniment, quite rightly, though he had dropped the announcement of his arrival, for a certain effect, had no notion of sharing the rest of what he knew with that raw roomful), if there was something to be silent and devoted about, Hyacinth ardently hoped that to him a chance would be given to show how he could practice

this superiority. He felt hot and nervous ; he got up suddenly, and, through the dark, tortuous, greasy passage which communicated with the outer world, he went forth into the street. The air was foul and sleety, but it refreshed him, and he stood in front of the public house and smoked another pipe. Bedraggled figures passed in and out, and a damp, *tattered, wretched man, with a spongy, purple face*, who had been thrust, suddenly, across the threshold, stood and whimpered in the brutal blaze of the row of lamps. The puddles glittered roundabout, and the silent vista of the street, bordered with low black houses, stretched away, in the wintry drizzle, to right and left, losing itself in the huge tragic city, where unmeasured misery lurked beneath the dirty night, ominously, *monstrously, still, only howling*, in its pain, in the heated human cockpit behind him. Ah, what could he do? What opportunity would rise? The blundering, divided counsels he had been listening to only made the helplessness of every one concerned more abject. If he had a definite wish while he stood there, it was that that exalted, deluded company should pour itself forth, with Muniment at its head, and surge through the *sleeping city, gathering the myriad miserable out of their slums and burrows, and roll into the selfish squares, and lift a tremendous hungry voice, and awaken the gorged indifferent to a terror that would bring them down*. Hyacinth lingered a quarter of an hour, but this grand spectacle gave no sign of coming off, and he finally returned to the noisy club-room, in a state of tormented wonder as to what better idea than this very bad one (which seemed to our young man to have at the least the merit that it *was* an idea) Muniment could be revolving in that too comprehensive brain of his.

As he reëntered the place he saw that the meeting was breaking up in disorder, or at all events in confusion, and

that, certainly, no organized attempt at the rescue of the proletariat would take place that night. All the men were on their feet and were turning away, amid a shuffling of benches and chairs, a hunching of shaggy shoulders, a frugal lowering of superfluous gas, and a varied vivacity of disgust and resignation. The moment after Hyacinth came in, Mr. Delancey, the *supposititious hairdresser*, jumped upon a chair at the far end of the room, and shrieked out an accusation which made every one stop and stare at him :—

“ Well, I want you all to know what strikes me, before we part company. There is n’t a man in the blessed lot that is n’t afraid of his bloody skin— afraid, afraid, afraid ! I’ll go anywhere with any one, but there is n’t another, by G—, by what I can make out ! There is n’t a mother’s son of you that’ll risk his precious bones ! ”

This little oration affected Hyacinth like a quick blow in the face ; it seemed to leap at him personally, as if a three-legged stool, or some hideous hob-nailed boot, had been shied at him. The room surged round, heaving up and down, while he was conscious of a loud explosion of laughter and scorn ; of cries of “ Order, order ! ” of some clear word of Muniment’s, “ I say, Delancey, just step down ; ” of Eustache Poupin shouting out, “ Vous insultez le peuple — vous insultez le peuple ! ” of other retorts, not remarkable for refinement. The next moment Hyacinth found that he had sprung up on a chair, opposite to the barber, and that at the sight of so rare a phenomenon the commotion had suddenly checked itself. It was the first time he had asked the ear of the company, and it was given on the spot. He was sure he looked very white, and it was even possible they could see him tremble. He could only hope that this did n’t make him ridiculous when he said, “ I don’t think it’s right of him to say that. There are others, besides him.

At all events, I want to speak for myself: it may do some good; I can't help it. I'm not afraid; I'm very sure I'm not. I'm ready to do anything that will do any good; anything, anything—I don't care a rap. In such a cause I should like the idea of danger. I don't consider my bones precious in the least, compared with some other things. If one is sure one is n't afraid, and one is accused, why should n't one say so?"

It appeared to Hyacinth that he was talking a long time, and when it was over he scarcely knew what happened. He felt himself, in a moment, down almost under the feet of the other men; stamped upon with intentions of applause, of familiarity; laughed over and jeered over, and hustled and poked in the ribs. He felt himself also pressed to the bosom of Eustache Poupin, who apparently was sobbing, while he heard some say, "Did ye hear the little beggar, as bold as a lion?" A trial of personal prowess between him and Mr. Delancey was proposed, but somehow it did n't take place, and at the end of five minutes the club-room emptied itself, not, evidently, to be reconstituted, outside, in a revolutionary procession. Paul Muniment had taken hold of Hyacinth, and said, "I'll trouble you to stay, you little desperado. I'll be blowed if I ever expected to see *you* on the stump!" Muniment remained, and M. Poupin and Mr. Schinkel lingered in their overcoats, beneath a dim, surviving gasburner, in the unventilated medium in which, at each renewed gathering, the Bloomsbury club seemed to recognize itself.

"Upon my word, I believe you're game," said Muniment, looking down at him with a serious face.

"Of course you think it's swagger, 'self-loaf,' as Schinkel says. But it is n't." Then Hyacinth asked, "In God's name, why don't we do something?"

"Ah, my child, to whom do you say it?" Eustache Poupin exclaimed, folding his arms despairingly.

"Whom do you mean by 'we'?" said Muniment.

"All the lot of us. There are plenty of them ready."

"Ready for what? There is nothing to be done here."

Hyacinth stared. "Then why the deuce do you come?"

"I dare say I sha'n't come much more. This is a place you've always overestimated."

"I wonder if I've overestimated you," Hyacinth murmured, gazing at his friend.

"Don't say that—he is going to introduce us to Hoffendahl!" Schinkel exclaimed, putting away his pipe in a receptacle almost as large as a fiddle-case.

"Should you like to see the genuine article, Robinson?" Muniment asked, with the same unusual absence of jocosity in his tone.

"The genuine article?" Hyacinth looked from one of his companions to the other.

"You have never seen it yet—though you think you have."

"And why have n't you shown it to me before?"

"Because I had never seen you on the stump." This time Muniment smiled.

"Bother the stump! I was trusting you."

"Exactly so. That gave me time."

"Don't come unless your mind is made up, *mon petit*," said Poupin.

"Are you going now—to see Hoffendahl?" Hyacinth cried.

"Don't shout it all over the place. He wants a genteel little customer like you," Muniment went on.

"Is it true? Are we all going?" Hyacinth demanded, eagerly.

"Yes, these two are in it; they are not very artful, but they are safe," said Muniment, looking at Poupin and Schinkel.

"Are *you* the genuine article, Muni-

ment?" asked Hyacinth, catching this look.

Muniment dropped his eyes on him ; then he said, "Yes, you 're the boy he wants. It's at the other end of London ; we must have a growler."

"Be calm, my child ; *un voici !*" and Eustache Poupin led Hyacinth out.

They all walked away from the Sun and Moon, and it was not for some five minutes that they encountered the four-wheeled cab which deepened so the solemnity of their expedition. After they were seated in it, Hyacinth learned that

Hoffendahl was in London but for three days, was liable to hurry away on the morrow, and was accustomed to receive visits at all kinds of queer hours. It was getting to be midnight ; the drive seemed interminable, to Hyacinth's impatience and curiosity. He sat next to Muniment, who passed his arm round him, as if by way of tacit expression of appreciation. They all ended by sitting silent, as the cab jogged along murky miles, and by the time it stopped Hyacinth had wholly lost, in the drizzling gloom, a sense of their whereabouts.

Henry James.

THE HOMESTEAD.

AGAINST the wooded hills it stands,
Ghost of a dead home, staring through
Its broken lights on wasted lands
Where old-time harvests grew.

Unploughed, unsown, by scythe unshorn,
The poor, forsaken farm-fields lie,
Once rich and rife with golden corn
And pale green breadths of rye.

Of healthful herb and flower bereft,
The garden plot no housewife keeps ;
Through weeds and tangle only left,
The snake, its tenant, creeps.

A lilac spray, once blossom-clad,
Sways bare before the empty rooms ;
Beside the roofless porch a sad,
Pathetic red rose blooms.

His track, in mould and dust of drouth,
On floor and hearth the squirrel leaves,
And in the fireless chimney's mouth
His web the spider weaves.

The leaning barn, about to fall,
Resounds no more on husking eves ;
No cattle low in yard or stall,
No thresher beats his sheaves.

So sad, so drear! It seems almost
Some haunting Presence makes its sign;
That down yon shadowy lane some ghost
Might drive his spectral kine!

O home so desolate and lorn!
Did all thy memories die with thee?
Were any wed, were any born,
Beneath this low roof-tree?

Whose axe the wall of forest broke,
And let the waiting sunshine through?
What good-wife sent the earliest smoke
Up the great chimney flue?

Did rustic lovers hither come?
Did maidens, swaying back and forth
In rhythmic grace, at wheel and loom,
Make light their toil with mirth?

Did child feet patter on the stair?
Did boyhood frolic in the snow?
Did gray age, in her elbow chair,
Knit, rocking to and fro?

The murmuring brook, the sighing breeze,
The pine's slow whisper, cannot tell;
Low mounds beneath the hemlock-trees
Keep the home secrets well.

Cease, mother-land, to fondly boast
Of sons far off who strive and thrive,
Forgetful that each swarming host
Must leave an emptier hive!

O wanderers from ancestral soil,
Leave noisome mill and chaffering store;
Gird up your loins for sturdier toil,
And build the home once more!

Come back to hayberry-scented slopes,
And fragrant fern, and ground-mat vine;
Breathe airs blown over holt and copse
Sweet with black birch and pine.

What matter if the gains are small
That life's essential wants supply?
Your homestead's title gives you all
That idle wealth can buy.

All that the many-dollared crave,
 The brick-walled slaves of Change and mart,
 Lawns, trees, fresh air, and flowers, you have,
 More dear for lack of art.

Your own sole masters, freedom-willed,
 With none to bid you go or stay,
 Till the old fields your fathers tilled,
 As manly men as they!

With skill that spares your toiling hands,
 And chemic aid that science brings,
 Reclaim the waste and outworn lands,
 And reign thereon as kings!

John Greenleaf Whittier.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE CONSTITUTION.

It is but a short time since the people of this country and of England each assumed as an axiom that their own form of government was the most perfect that human ingenuity could devise; while the political writers of each nation received the same doctrine very much like a proposition in geometry, — a thing to be proved, it is true, but a matter of which there could be no doubt, and which needed only a formal demonstration to be readily accepted by every one. All this is so recent that it is not a little surprising to-day to hear criticisms upon the form of their own governments by natives of many of the free countries of Europe and America. The sign is encouraging, because the complaints do not come from persons who wish to change the nature of their governments, making them more or less popular, but arise from a conviction that the government in its actual form does not work as well as it should. The most common grievance is that the legislature is unable to accomplish the work it ought to do. We hear suggestions from England that the rules of the houses of Parliament might be changed to advantage; from

France and from Canada that the system of a responsible ministry is the cause of most of their misfortunes; and for this country the same system of a responsible ministry is recommended as a panacea for all our ills. Now the government by a responsible ministry has many unquestionable advantages. It has a great tendency to interest and instruct the people; it conduces to intelligent and systematic legislation; it turns a flood of light upon every corner of the administration; and if the object of government is to divide the people into two political parties, and to give rapid and unlimited effect to the opinions of the majority, no better political system has ever, perhaps, been suggested, — provided, indeed, that the people themselves have no deep-rooted prejudices, founded on religion, on race, or on historical association, to impede their progress.

But in the United States the object of government is looked upon in a very different light from this. It is here considered of the first importance to protect the individual, to prevent the majority from oppressing the minority, and, except within certain definite limits,

to give effect to the wishes of the people only after such solemn formalities have been complied with as to make it clear that the popular feeling is not caused by temporary excitement, but is the result of a mature and lasting opinion; and this is done, in the words of the Constitution of Massachusetts, "to the end it may be a government of laws, and not of men," or, as we should put it to-day, a government of law, and not of popular impulse. The result is a complicated and unwieldy form of government; a division of powers into legislative, executive, and judicial; a subdivision of the legislative power between two houses and a president or governor; and in most of the States a distribution of the executive power among a large number of officers who are virtually independent of each other. These divisions of power are also accompanied by cross-divisions separating the powers given to the federal government from those reserved to the several States; but the feature of the American system which shows in the most striking manner the attachment of our people to the fundamental principles of law is to be found in the power of the courts to disregard an act of the legislature when it violates those rights which have been protected by the Constitution. The notion that legislative power could never infringe private rights was, indeed, carried so far at one time that certain judges assumed an authority to hold a statute invalid if it was repugnant to the common principles of justice and civil liberty, even if it did not conflict with any provision of the Constitution.¹ It is needless to say that such a doctrine is not law, but the fact that it could be proclaimed from the bench is significant as an indication of popular feeling.

It is not my intention, in this article, to discuss the relative merits of the

English and American forms of government, but merely to attempt to show that a responsible ministry cannot be grafted into our institutions without entirely changing their nature, and destroying those features of our government which we have been in the habit of contemplating with the most pride.

The essential characteristic of a parliamentary government consists in the fact that the ministry (a body comprising all those members of the executive department on whom the policy of the administration depends) can remain in office only so long as it receives the support of the legislature. The members of the ministry have seats in the legislature, and they are expected to superintend its work, and to prepare such bills as they think ought to be enacted. But it is not for the performance of these duties alone that they are responsible. They are liable to be turned out of office if the legislature disapprove of their conduct in matters purely administrative. The late Gladstone ministry, for example, was no less responsible to the House of Commons for sending Lord Wolseley up the Nile than it was for introducing the Franchise Bill, and a vote censuring its policy in the Soudan campaign would have caused its resignation no less certainly than a defeat on the question of extending the suffrage. The legislature is made familiar with the policy of the ministry in legislative matters by the bills it introduces, but it can also obtain as much information about matters of administration as it desires by means of questions addressed to the ministers. It is evident, therefore, that the supervision which the legislature exercises over the details of administration is limited only by the temper of the legislature itself, or, in fact, by the intelligence, energy, and strength of the opposition. The legislature has complete power of control over all matters, both legislative and executive, but so long as the ministry retains the support of the legislature all

¹ See cases collected in Cooley on Constitutional Limitations, * 164, *et seq.*

the powers of government are virtually entrusted to its care. In the words of Bagehot, the cabinet "is a board of control chosen by the legislature, out of persons whom it trusts and knows, to rule the nation;" and this, in the opinion of John Stuart Mill, is the most perfect form of government.

Now let us suppose such a system to be introduced into the United States, and let us try to discover what effect it would produce upon our institutions. I shall, however, confine the inquiry to the federal government, for the results in the States would be very similar.

The first matter to be considered is the position the President would occupy if an amendment to the Constitution were to provide that the executive officers should be responsible to Congress; and let us suppose, to begin with, that the President himself is given a seat in one of the houses. If, in such a case, the President were a man of sufficient ability and force of character, he might become the leader of Congress, and he would then occupy a position essentially the same as that of the premier in England. He would be, in fact, his own prime minister. This was the situation of M. Thiers when President of the French republic, for he refused to allow his advisers to form a ministry, and held himself personally responsible for the acts of his government. But no matter how great a leader the President might be, such a state of things could last only so long as Congress continued to be of his own party. The moment a Congress of the opposite party was elected he would be obliged either to resign, or to give up all exercise of power, and surrender the government into the hands of some one who could obtain the support of Congress; because, by the very definition of a responsible ministry, no one can continue at the head of the administration whose policy has been condemned by the legislature. Experience, indeed, shows us how rarely it

would happen that the President elected by the people would be able personally to lead the Congress. If he were not able to do this, the real leader of Congress and head of the government would be some other member of the administration; and in that case the President would have no more actual power than if he had no seat in Congress, and were not a part of the ministry at all.

But, in fact, no one proposes that the President shall be a responsible prime minister, or have a seat in Congress. The advocates of a parliamentary government go no further than to propose that the advisers of the President shall have seats in Congress, and that they alone shall be responsible to it for their actions. Under such a system the President would remain in office for the four years of his term, in any event, while the cabinet officers would retain their places only so long as Congress was willing to allow them to do so. The President would then be obliged to select his Cabinet from among the leaders of Congress, for otherwise the administration would be without strength, and in danger of being upset whenever the men who really led the Congress should conclude that they wanted cabinet positions for themselves. Now it is evident that cabinet officers, who know that they cannot be dismissed without the consent of Congress, and who are at the same time the leaders of Congress and able to control its actions, will find it very easy to carry out their own policy of administration without much regard to the wishes of the President. They are called upon, moreover, to explain and defend before Congress the policy of the government, and they cannot do this unless that policy is really their own. They would make but a sorry piece of work in defending the acts of the President unless they really approved of those acts, and were willing to assume complete responsibility for them. They clearly could not shield themselves by

pleading the orders of the President, because his orders would not be binding on Congress, and such a defense would not prevent Congress from turning the Cabinet out, and insisting on a ministry which would fulfill its wishes. Of course the responsibility of the Cabinet to Congress would not make the President a figure-head at once. George III. exercised an immense influence over the House of Commons long after the principle of a responsible ministry had become a part of the British Constitution, and in a less degree we should see the same thing here. The tradition of the President's authority would probably enable him to influence politics for a long time, but as Congress became more and more conscious of its power it would follow more and more closely the acts of the administration. It would gradually force the cabinet officers to be strictly responsible to itself, and finally it would concentrate all powers, both legislative and executive, in its own hands. So long as Congress and the President were of the same political party the process would probably go on slowly; but it is clear that if a Congress of a party hostile to the President were elected he would immediately lose all control of the administration, which would pass into the hands of his political opponents. Mr. Bagehot, while discussing the separation of the legislative and executive powers in this country, and the exclusion of our cabinet officers from seats in Congress, remarks, "And, to the effectual maintenance of such a separation, the exclusion of the President's ministers from the legislature is essential. If they are not excluded, they become the executive, they eclipse the President himself. A legislative chamber is greedy and covetous; it acquires as much, it concedes as little, as possible. The passions of its members are its rulers; the law-making faculty, the most comprehensive of imperial faculties, is its instrument; it will *take* the administration,

if it can take it. Tried by their own aims, the founders of the United States were wise in excluding the ministers from Congress." In those countries in which a parliamentary government has been introduced, the nominal head of the administration has lost all political power, and this must, in the nature of things, always take place. Germany, it is true, presents a striking exception to this rule, for there, by means of the vast personal force of Prince Bismarck, the emperor has been enabled to keep a strong hold on the reins of government; but no one can suppose that Bismarck himself would have been able to treat the Congress of the United States as he has treated the German Reichstag, and even in Germany he has done no more than put off the day he so much dreads, because it will not be possible for his successors to follow in his footsteps in this matter.

After considering the position the President would occupy if we had a responsible ministry, we are naturally led to inquire what changes such a system of government would produce upon Congress. That body is now composed of two branches, each of which has not only a constitutional right to refuse to enact laws proposed by the other, but has no hesitation in actually exercising its authority. Mr. Bagehot, a strong advocate of parliamentary government, considers such a state of things exceedingly pernicious, while, on the other hand, the publicists of the last century and most Americans at the present day assert that it is very important, if not absolutely necessary, as a check upon popular impulse. Let us inquire whether the existence of two really independent houses of Congress is possible in a parliamentary government. The Cabinet is to be responsible. Responsible to whom? To the two houses of Congress. This is all very well so long as the houses are of one mind; but what will happen when they disagree? Suppose, for example,

that the House of Representatives should continue to support the Cabinet while the Senate opposed it, and that the Cabinet refused to resign. The Senate would then have but two courses open to it: either to hamper the policy of the administration in every possible way, and attempt to force the hands of the Cabinet and the House, or to submit; and if it should submit, it would fall in prestige, and gradually lose all voice in the control of the administration. When, in such a case, the majorities of the House of Representatives and of the Senate do not belong to radically different parties, a compromise may be arranged, it is true: but if this arrangement is really a compromise, and not a virtual surrender on the part of one of the houses, the Cabinet will be weak and its policy negative; or should it happen that the Cabinet is vigorous and composed of able men, it will play off each of the houses against the other, and be in reality responsible to neither of them. A ministry cannot be responsible to two chambers. In the long run it must depend upon the support of the stronger one alone, and disregard the action of the weaker. And this becomes more clear when we consider that one of the most important duties of a responsible ministry is to explain and defend its policy in the chambers. But the ministry cannot really defend its policy in both chambers, for the debates that take place in one cannot be repeated in the other, nor will a part of the debates take place in one and a part in the other. All the important discussions will tend to occur in the chamber which shows the most power, and the chamber in which the debates take place will have the most attraction for men of talent and ambition; and so the stronger chamber will grow stronger, and the weaker will become weaker, until all authority is centred in the former. Mr. Bagehot's description of the position of the House of Lords must in time apply to

the second chamber in any country, where the principal chamber is not so torn by factions as to be unable to maintain a definite policy of its own. "Since the Reform Act," he says, "the House of Lords has become a revising and suspending House. It can alter Bills; it can reject Bills on which the House of Commons is not yet thoroughly in earnest — upon which the nation is not yet determined. Their veto is a sort of hypothetical veto."

The French Senate appears to be an exception, for it has a very considerable amount of power, and it sometimes happens that it is not afraid to defeat the policy of the Chamber of Deputies. The most extraordinary example of this occurred in 1883, when the premier, M. Duclerk, resigned, because he could not approve of a bill for the expulsion of the Orleans Princes, which was supported by a majority of the committee of the Chamber of Deputies and by most of the members of his own cabinet. M. Fallières formed a ministry, and the bill was immediately passed by the Chamber of Deputies; two weeks later, however, it was defeated in the Senate, and M. Fallières resigned. M. Ferry succeeded him, and managed to deprive the Princes of their commands in the army under the provisions of an existing statute, but the Chamber of Deputies made no attempt to insist upon its policy of expulsion. Thus within three weeks two prime ministers were wrecked by the same bill: the first by the Chamber of Deputies which supported the bill, and the second by the Senate which refused to pass it. Now this was possible only because the majority of the Chamber of Deputies, although agreed upon the bill in question, was not sufficiently united to be really in earnest in the support of the ministry. The Chamber is, in fact, so split up into factions that a compact majority is impossible, and a committee system unsuited to a parliamentary government

tends to increase the difficulty, so that every ministry is the result of a sort of coalition. The Chamber tolerates, but never supports, the ministers; and this is the cause not only of the weakness of the ministries and their uncertain hold of office, but also of the power which the Senate has been able to retain.

In a parliamentary government the power of dissolving the legislature is almost essential to the smooth working of the system, because a minister who feels that the people are on his side when he loses the support of the house cannot be made properly responsible to the latter. The ministry looks to the house for support, but in order that the system may work well both must feel that their policy is in harmony with the will of the people, because the people are the final judges of the policy of the government, and an election, whether it takes place upon a sudden dissolution or at the expiration of a fixed time, is an appeal to their judgment. Now in regard to the two branches of Congress, there can be no doubt which one would overshadow the other and become the centre of power. Every two years, according to the Constitution, the entire House of Representatives is elected, and there assembles at Washington a new House in sympathy with the opinions of the people: if, therefore, we had a responsible ministry, the people, in electing the House, would pass judgment biennially upon the acts of the ministry. But only one third of the Senate is renewed within the same period. The Senate, therefore, is never a very accurate index of the opinions of its constituents, and a reelection of a third of the Senators could hardly be looked upon as a verdict upon the acts of a responsible ministry; and even if the Cabinet were given power to dissolve entirely both branches of Congress, the two houses would not stand upon an equality, because the election of the House of Representatives would indicate the opinion of the people, while

the new Senate would represent only the States; and there can be no question that the will of the people, and not that of the States, would be the decisive matter. The Senate, indeed, represents the people indirectly; but while the House represents the present wishes of the people, the Senate may be said to represent its more deep-rooted and lasting opinions. It is partly to this quality that the Senate owes its power and its usefulness. In a parliamentary government, however, an appeal to the people means an appeal to the present opinion of the people, for it can mean nothing else. The elections to the House of Representatives would be the answer to this appeal, and it is the House, therefore, which would be clothed with the power of the people.

I shall now boldly assume that I have convinced the reader that all I have said is true, and I shall lay it down as a foundation for further discussion that, if a responsible ministry were introduced into our government, the House of Representatives would acquire the powers of the House of Commons; that the Senate would occupy a position similar to that of the House of Lords; and that the President would be reduced to such a condition that, except for the absence of a pedigree and of crown jewels, he might well bear the dreaded name of King. I wish now to inquire what effect such a state of things would have upon the relations of the state and federal governments. In discussing the government of the United States, Mr. Bagehot remarks, "After saying that the division of the legislative and executive in presidential governments weakens the legislative power, it may seem a contradiction to say that it also weakens the executive power. But it is not a contradiction. The division weakens the whole aggregate force of government — the entire imperial power; and therefore it weakens both halves." The converse of this is also true. The union of

the legislative and executive departments would increase the aggregate force of the federal government, — would increase its power to accomplish its purposes; and would, therefore, enable it with much greater ease to encroach on the authority of the States if it should desire to do so. Now it is almost an axiom in political science that the powerful always hunger for more power, and that the ability of one body to encroach upon the authority of another is the father of a desire to do so. But this is not all. It is claimed by those who advocate a parliamentary government for this country that such a government would increase the interest of the people in national affairs; and this in itself is a very good thing, but it must not be forgotten that a concentration of popular interest means a concentration of popular power. If the people become excited over a federal issue beyond a certain point, if they learn to look upon it as a matter of paramount importance, they will endeavor to give effect to their opinions with all the power that they possess, without much regard for the theoretical rights of the States. We saw an example of this at the time of the civil war. It is indeed a proof of the strength of our Constitution that the war did not

produce a far greater concentration than we have witnessed, and that the system has so nearly recovered its equilibrium; but in spite of its strength the Constitution would not stand many strains of such violence. Now, of course I do not mean to assert that under a responsible ministry the popular excitement would at all compare with what it was at the time of the civil war; but I do mean to say that national questions would constantly assume an importance in the eyes of the people which would entirely overshadow local interests, and that a responsible ministry, armed with the power of public opinion, would bring to bear upon the States a steady pressure which they would be unable to resist. It has been said that the United States is still in its feudal period, and to a certain extent the metaphor is appropriate; because, just as the feudal barons in the Middle Ages presented points of physical resistance to the centralizing ambition of the king, so to-day the States present points of moral resistance to the centralizing tendency of our national government. They form centres for the organization of local opinion, and rallying points for those who are in a minority on federal questions.¹

We have not yet considered the effect

¹ It is also to be remembered that the smaller the community which exercises political power the larger will the individual be in proportion to that community. A member of a small community will find it comparatively easy, therefore, to assert his rights, and the community will find it difficult to trample upon them.

M. Boutmy, in comparing the governments of France, England, and the United States, imputes the absolutism of the French to the absence of great public corporations. His remarks are so much in point here that I venture to quote them at some length (*Droit Constitutionnel*, page 239 *et seq.*): "En France, il n'y a pas depuis 1789 d'autre être collectif animé d'une vie puissante que la nation, conçue dans sa totalité indivisible. Au sein de la nation il n'y a de constant que l'individu. . . . La souveraineté sera théoriquement la volonté de tous les citoyens, et pratiquement elle se confondra avec la volonté de la majorité numérique. . . . Il n'y a pas de point d'appui en dehors de la majorité, il n'y en a donc pas contre elle pour une résistance ou une dissidence qui dure. . . .

On a vu qu'en France l'équation politique ne comprend que deux termes : l'individu et l'État, un infiniment petit et un infiniment grand. . . . L'égoïsme chétif de chaque citoyen fait seul face à l'intérêt indivisible et supérieur de la nation. . . . Les droits de l'individu, premier thème de la constitution, source reconnue de tout pouvoir légitime, pâlissent trop souvent pendant cette seconde phase et s'effacent devant cette idéal usurpateur. L'intempérance législative et réglementaire du Parlement et des pouvoirs public, l'existence et l'activité exagérée d'une *justice administrative* où l'État figure comme juge et partie, sont les deux faits qui accusent le plus sûrement ce penchant à subordonner et à humilier l'intérêt ou les libertés privées, et à fonder le despotisme consciencieux de l'intérêt public. L'Angleterre, et, dans la sphère fédérale, les États-Unis, ont moins souffert que nous du premier de ces maux; ils ont échappé au second.

"Ces deux pays ont dû en effet à l'importance et au prestige des grandes personnes morales qui ont précédé et créé leurs constitutions, de ne pas cou-

of a responsible ministry upon the most vital part of our government, the part on which the whole system hinges, and that is the authority of the courts to refuse to treat as law a statute which violates the provisions of the Constitution. It is this which marks the limits of the different powers in the government, which prevents gradual and unobserved encroachments, and makes it possible to maintain a system of divided sovereignty. To European statesmen this power of our courts is a standing wonder, but to the American it is the obvious and natural result of a written constitution. It is, in fact, the logical consequence of a limited form of government. Suppose, for example, that a legislature is invested with only a limited authority; any act outside that limit is unauthorized, *ultra vires*, as the lawyers would say, — that is, beyond the powers of the legislature, — and has no force. Every one may disregard it, for it is entirely invalid, and clearly the courts cannot give it any effect.¹ Inasmuch as the legislature represents the people, and in the States, at least, the very same people who establish the Constitution, it may seem strange that they should limit the power of their own representatives; but it is precisely because the people alone are the unquestioned source of all government in this country that they are willing to limit their own power. The most astonishing thing to foreign statesmen, however, is not that the people should profess to limit their own power, for this has been done in European constitutions, but that they should keep to those limits, and allow the courts to disregard the acts of their representatives when they overstep them. In the United

naître jusqu'à présent cette antithèse heurtée de l'État et de l'individu, cette oscillation sans arrêt intermédiaire, qui relève et fait dominer alternativement les droits de l'un et la haute mission de l'autre. Un autre problème a retenu dans une région moyenne l'attention des constituants et les a empêchés de glisser sur la pente vers ces deux questions extrêmes, c'est celui d'une balance à établir entre des puissances préexistantes."

States, on the other hand, all this is so much a matter of every-day occurrence that we are in the habit of looking upon a constitution as possessing a sort of intrinsic strength, and maintaining itself *proprio vigore*. The illusion is beautiful, and justified in our own case by experience, for it is founded on the respect which our citizens feel for the law, and especially for those fundamental principles which are embodied in their constitutions. But in reality a constitution can retain its force only so long as the people care for it more than they care to effect any immediate object. Every government is bottomed on force; or, at least, its existence depends upon the consent of those who have power to change it, and in a purely democratic nation the form of the government depends upon the consent of the majority. When the majority make up their minds that they would rather amend the constitution than fail to effect some desired object, it becomes certain that the constitution will be amended, and if this happens often the fate of the constitution is sealed. The Constitution of the United States depends, therefore, upon the fact that the people, with rare exceptions, care more about that Constitution than about any present issue; and the courts are supported in holding a statute unconstitutional because the people cling to the fundamental principles of law represented by the court with more affection than they feel for the statute which the court decides to be invalid.

Now some one will, perhaps, concede that all this may be very true, but ask how a responsible ministry affects the matter. It affects it vitally, because,

He adds later that this is ceasing to be true of England. It is only fair to say that M. Boutmy considers the absolutism of France to be a higher form of civilization than the decentralization of the United States.

¹ In *The Atlantic Monthly* for November, 1884, Mr. Brooks Adams has made a very interesting study of the historical development of this idea.

as I have attempted to show, a responsible ministry involves the fusion of the legislative and executive branches of the government, and the concentration of all political power in the hands of the direct representatives of the people; and this, accompanied by the increased excitement over national issues and the decay in the political power and importance of the States, would accustom us to seeing rapid and unlimited effect given to the opinions of the majority. The people would soon learn to chafe at the delays and obstructions of our constitutional methods, and lose the habit of restraining themselves for the sake of an ideal; while the majority would naturally consider every political issue as of paramount importance, and feel that the solution of a pressing question ought not to be endangered for the sake of any theoretical principles, or in order to preserve the forms of a paper constitution. The courts, too, would find themselves in a very different position. Instead of standing between the different branches of government among which political authority is divided, and limiting the power of one for the benefit of another, they would have the full force of government on one side, and nothing to support them on the other. At present the more important questions of constitutional law before the court usually involve the authority of the nation as against the States, or the rights of the States as against the nation, or the power of one department of the government as against another; and even when the court holds an act unconstitutional on the ground that it violates one of those provisions which are established solely for the protection of individuals, it does not set aside the act of the people, but only the act of a body which but partially represents the people, and exercises only a very small part of the popular sovereignty. But under a parliamentary government a court which should venture to declare a stat-

ute unconstitutional would be brought face to face with the people themselves.

In a speech at Edinburgh, two or three years ago, Lord Salisbury is reported to have said that he did not often envy the Americans anything, but that there was one institution which he did envy them, and which he should like to see adopted in England, and that was a court possessing power to declare a statute unconstitutional. No doubt the Tory leader would have been pleased with any institution which would check the legislation of the Liberals, but in this instance he was unfortunate, because he desired an impossibility. Apart from the fact that the one principle of the English Constitution is the omnipotence of Parliament, and that the court would find no ground to build its decisions upon, no court in England could possibly have power to hold acts of Parliament invalid, because Parliament is, in effect, a meeting of the people acting through their representatives. Complete sovereignty resides, therefore, in Parliament, and to oppose the will of that body is to oppose the will of the people. But the American Congress has not complete sovereignty, nor has any department of the government, state or federal, nor, indeed, have all of them acting together. Congress has no authority to declare the will of the people, except within the limits prescribed by the Constitution; for the Constitution itself is the final expression of the popular will, and is binding upon every officer of the government as the supreme law of the land. I am not speaking of the Constitution from a legal standpoint alone. I am speaking of it as it is regarded by the people themselves; for if this view of the matter were entertained only by the lawyers, no court which assumed power to set aside an act of Congress would be tolerated for a moment. The power of our court, then, to pass judgment upon the validity of statutes depends upon the fact that

the voice of Congress is not the voice of the people : but if a parliamentary form of government were to be introduced into this country, Congress, like the British Parliament, would acquire authority to declare the will of the people, and then no court could long withstand its power.

I have, so far, only attempted to consider the probable consequences of making cabinet officers responsible to Congress, and to prove that, under such a change of methods, our government would centralize strongly, at the expense of the authority and independence of the States, and that in time the national House of Representatives would draw unlimited political power into its own hands. But a recent writer on the subject claims that, in the absence of a responsible ministry, these results have already taken place, and this article would be incomplete without a review of the facts on which he bases his opinion.

In his book on Congressional Government Mr. Wilson uses a line of argument very different from the one commonly in vogue with those who advocate a parliamentary government for this country. He says nothing, in fact, inconsistent with what I have described as the probable consequences of ministerial responsibility in this country, but, on the contrary, after the manner of Bagehot's essay on the English Constitution, he attempts to show that the actual form of our government is already radically different from the plan that our forefathers designed, and from the descriptions to be found in our political literature. He claims that the supposed checks and balances of the system have failed ; that the President has ceased to be an obstacle to the power of Congress ; and that the States are no longer able to resist the encroachments of the federal government. Of the power of the Senate, curiously enough, he says but little, although he devotes a chapter to this body ; but he certainly gives the reader the impres-

sion that he considers all real power centred in the committees of the House of Representatives. All this is the more surprising, because one of the complaints of Congress which we most commonly hear is that the House of Representatives has brought itself into such a condition that it is unable to legislate. Of the judiciary, after explaining that the courts do not and cannot put any effective restraint upon the actions of Congress, Mr. Wilson says, " This balance of judiciary against legislature and executive would seem, therefore, to be another of those ideal balances which are to be found in the books, rather than in the rough realities of actual practice ; " and later he adds, " For all practical purposes the national government is supreme over the state governments, and Congress is supreme over its so-called coördinate branches. Whereas Congress at first overshadowed neither President nor federal judiciary, it now on occasion rules both with easy mastery and a high hand." On these facts he founds the argument that if our theoretical division of powers has miscarried in practice, and if our government has already become centralized, we had better adopt that form of centralized government which will work the best ; we had better establish a responsible ministry. The argument is logically sound, and the conclusion follows properly enough, if the premises are admitted ; but these I cannot agree with, and I wish to consider them in the brief space which this article will allow.

Our government has undoubtedly centralized since the beginning of the century ; for the greater facility of communication between the different parts of the Union, the formation of vast corporations comprising several States in the scope of their operations, and the consequent industrial development of the country make demands upon the federal government for the exercise of powers which were far less important

eighty years ago. There exists unquestionably a tendency to centralization, which all citizens who care for the Constitution should watch with a jealous eye; but it is a tendency very easy to exaggerate, and not yet developed to such an extent as to impair the political power and independence of the States. The war and the reconstruction which followed it necessarily produced for a time a great increase in the power of the national government. A part of this increase of power has been rendered permanent by the adoption of the recent amendments to the Constitution, while the decision of the Supreme Court in the legal tender cases has assured to Congress the possession of another part; and for the rest, it is difficult to shake off habits of political thought once acquired; but for the last ten years the federal government has been playing a constantly decreasing part in the internal affairs of the Southern States, and he must be blind to the signs of the times who does not perceive the tendency to leave to these States the management of their domestic interests. The Supreme Court, moreover, in the civil rights cases has struck a heavy blow at the parental policy of Congress, by denying to it the right to interfere directly with the social condition of the citizens of the States, and limiting its authority to counteracting and redressing the effects of the action of the state authorities. Mr. Wilson cites as an illustration of the growth in the power of the federal government the enormous increase in the number of federal officials; and so long as offices are made a reward for party service, this standing army of placemen adds dangerously to the political power of the United States; but when we obtain the complete reform of the civil service, for which every citizen ought to hope, the mere number of federal office-holders will in itself be little or no source of power to the national government. Mr. Wilson also men-

tions the practice of spending federal money to make internal improvements, and undoubtedly the power of Congress to do this was hotly debated fifty years ago, and has now become an unquestioned part of our constitutional system; and yet even during the administration of President Jackson, Congress, under the name of deposits, in effect gave to the States the surplus from the national treasury, and it can hardly be said that Congress has of late years done anything under the name of internal improvements which carries the doctrine of implied powers further than this. The statute which provides for the appointment of supervisors of election is cited as the most galling example of the assumption of power by the national government. But it must be remembered that the statute was intended to counteract an illegal exercise of power,—not by the States, it is true, but by persons whom the States ought to control,—and that the statute has not so much the effect of changing the original balance of power between the States and the federal government as of restoring the balance of power; for the framers of the Constitution never contemplated any local power to tamper with the results of elections. The fact appears to be that, although the United States has largely increased its authority, the government has not become centralized to such an extent as to upset the balance of power, or even to disturb seriously the equilibrium of the system. Nor has the gain been all on one side. Certain States, of which New York is a conspicuous example, for a long time chose the presidential electors by districts, but by adopting the plan of choosing them on a general ticket they have greatly consolidated their political power. We must not forget, moreover, that the electoral commission in 1876 decided that Congress had no power to go behind the returns of the States in counting the votes for President; where-

as in 1839 the House of Representatives refused to allow certain members whose election was contested to take part in the organization of the House, although these members held the official certificates of the governor and council declaring them elected; for the House denied that the certificate of the State gave the holder even a *prima facie* right to a seat. The two cases, of course, are not exactly parallel, and the decisions were rendered under the pressure of party excitement; but still they go far to disprove the theory that the political power of the States has decayed.

The relative strength of the three departments of the federal government has suffered much greater changes during the century, but it has not always been the same department that has encroached on the others. At times the power of Congress has been in the ascendant, at times that of the President; and this must continue to happen as long as Congresses differ so much in the talent and experience of their members, and as long as a weak and short-sighted President is unable to exercise as much influence as a President of ability and force of character. But Mr. Wilson is in error when he states that "Congress is supreme over its so-called coordinate branches." A sufficient proof of the continuing strength and independence of the President is to be found in the fact that to this day he has no hesitation in using his power of veto; and, indeed, the veto has been used fully as often of late years as at any period of our national existence. If any further evidence of the power of the President is needed, it is enough to refer to the last great struggle he has had with Congress, — the controversy between President Hayes and Congress about riders upon appropriation bills, in which the President was completely victorious. The veto can, of course, be overridden by a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress, and this is done as often as

the majority in both houses is large enough to make it possible; but this is no encroachment on the part of Congress, for it is merely the legitimate exercise of a power which Congress was intended to possess.

Turning from the legislative to the executive functions of the President, we find that his power has undergone very great variations. When Jackson adopted the practice of giving federal offices as a reward for party service, he forged for the use of Presidents a political instrument of tremendous power. A stranger, indeed, who knew nothing of America except what he could hear during a presidential campaign, would readily believe that the President held the only federal office of any real importance. This results in part from the habit of making the candidate for that office the standard-bearer in the fight, but it comes also from the fact that the party workers yearn more for the spoils which lie in the gift of the President than for the control of legislation which lies in the hands of Congress. The President has not been suffered to reap in peace the benefit of this great invention, for a practice has arisen by which the congressional delegations from the several States have acquired a great power over the distribution of the federal patronage. This practice has grown gradually and silently, but during the attempt of Congress to tie the hands of President Johnson it passed the Tenure of Office Act, which struck an open blow, not only at the power of the President to use the spoils for his own advantage, but also at his power to direct the policy of his own administration. The authority of the President fell at this time lower than it has ever been before or since; and although the Tenure of Office Act, in a slightly modified form, still exists, it has not the political importance which it possessed in Johnson's day. The doctrine that the President has, under the Constitution, no

right to remove any federal officer without the consent of the Senate is not new. It has been a subject of dispute ever since Washington's administration, but in Johnson's time it was used to force him to retain a cabinet officer who was bitterly opposed to his policy. It will probably be a long time before the Senate tries to do this again, and it is clear that such an attempt could not now be successful. The subject of the appointing power of the President cannot properly be dismissed without a reference to the principle of senatorial courtesy, by which each Senator of the President's political party controlled an important part of the federal patronage in his own State, because the contest between President Garfield and Senator Conkling on this matter is one indication of the recovery by the President of his lost influence. Mr. Wilson's views in regard to the position of the President are explained by a passage in which he says, "No one, I take it for granted, is disposed to disallow the principle that the representatives of the people are the proper ultimate authority in all matters of government, and that administration is merely the clerical part of government." The first proposition contained in this sentence is true in a parliamentary government, but the second is not true in any form of government; and that it cannot be applied to our President, even if we pass over the veto and the power to control foreign relations, is clear when we remember how large a part the executive played in the final settlement of the Southern question. The importance of the executive in the solution of that question was not exceptional. It has long been evident, for example, that Congress can do very little towards the reform of the civil service without a zealous cooperation on the part of the President.

It is only necessary to look at the

recent volumes of the Supreme Court reports to be convinced that the judiciary has not lost its independence or its power. The decisions in the civil rights cases,¹ in the Arlington Heights case,² and in the case which decides that the House of Representatives has no power to examine a witness and to commit him for contempt on a matter not strictly connected with its legislative duties,³ all prove that the judiciary has not become subservient to the other departments of the government. In spite of the well-known packing of the bench under President Grant, and the unfortunate connection of the judges with the electoral commission, the Supreme Court appears to stand at the present day as high in public estimation as it ever stood before. I might with truth go further, and say that the concentration of power caused by the civil war has turned in the long run mainly to the profit of the national courts. The recent amendments to the Constitution have increased but little the powers of the President and of Congress, but they have added enormously to the authority of the federal judiciary.

Among the recent historical studies published at Johns Hopkins University is a valuable essay, by Mr. Horace Davis, on the Relations of the Departments as Adjusted by a Century, and the conclusions of the author are singularly contradictory to those of Mr. Wilson. He shows that in the States the executive has been continually gaining at the expense of the legislature, and he considers that the President is recovering the power which he lost during Johnson's administration, while he believes that the judiciary, both state and federal, has steadily increased in power and influence. Slight variations, however, in the relative strength of the different departments of the government do not affect my argument, so long as the bal-

¹ 109 U. S. 3.

² *United States v. Lee*, 106 U. S. 196.

³ *Kilbourn v. Thompson*, 103 U. S. 168.

ance of the system remains substantially unimpaired. It is enough that the power of the federal government is still limited by the rights of the States ; and that the houses of Congress, the President, and the federal judiciary can each check any serious encroachments on the part of the others.

I have not attempted in this article to consider the question whether a parliamentary system would be better for us than our present Constitution, much less to discuss the relative merits of these two forms of government in the abstract. In fact, the time has passed when every good American believed that all foreign nations were more or less benighted, because they did not adopt our Constitution. For myself, I believe that our own system is still the best for us ; although, apart from those abuses which have no necessary connection with our form of government, no one can shut his eyes to the defects inherent in the system itself.

The American does not accept the maxim that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. He has altogether too much tendency to believe that liberty and good government can be bought with a written constitution ; and that, once possessed, these blessings form part of that property of which he cannot be deprived, except by due process of law. In consequence of the division of political power into so many small fragments, the ordinary citizen does not take interest enough in any one of them, and leaves the control of public affairs too exclusively in the hands of the professional politicians. Whether these defects are greater than those which we ought to expect under a parliamentary government I do not here pretend to inquire. I have only endeavored to prove that a responsible ministry cannot form a part of our present system ; that one of these forms of government or the other must be accepted in its completeness, with all its merits and with all its faults.

Abbott Lawrence Lowell.

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER IN CHINA.

It would seem that English-speaking people have, with singular unanimity, joined in canonizing the remarkable Englishman who is believed to have perished at Khartoum. For such canonization this paper will have no word of disparaging criticism ; nor will it touch upon any of this man's work except that connected with the suppression of the Taeping Rebellion in China.

Were General Gordon living, and able to speak for himself, he would not claim the entire credit of that achievement ; nor would he, like his biographers and eulogists, decry or ignore the yeoman's service done by a humble American, who gave his life for the cause. I, the present writer, might hesitate to

break a lance with these autocratic British historians but for the advantage which I possess in having lived on the spot at the time of the operations, and thus gotten information at first hand.

It would be well to strip the performances of the so-called " Ever Victorious Army " of the romance and sentiment with which they have been invested. In their dealings, from the very first, with China, foreign nations have uniformly and completely ignored the golden rule. They have been guided wholly by self-interest, and have enforced their claims by the power of strong battalions. The great concessions to foreign trade of the last thirty years were secured only after the " Arrow " war of 1856, and

the campaign of 1860 which resulted in the capture of Peking. While the Imperialists were struggling in these years against the Allies, the great Taiping Rebellion gained much ground; and a ghastly and terrible thing it was, attended by a loss of human life and a destruction of property for which no parallel can be found in modern history. The city of Nankin, and Soochow, the "Paris of China," were taken, and Shanghai was threatened. Within a hundred miles of the latter place I have walked for hours through a country once thickly settled, happy and prosperous, but now deserted and rapidly becoming a jungle, strewn with ruins.

When the Allies had driven General San-ko-lin-sin into Peking, and the Antin gate of the city had been opened just as Sir Robert Napier was about to storm it, the Allies were confronted with this internal dissension, threatening the very existence of the government with which they were just making treaties of peace and commerce. Of course they had no more right to meddle with the Taiping Rebellion than they had to interfere in our civil war; but the world has condoned their action, because it is taught that in helping the Imperialists they acted from pure motives and in the great cause of humanity. As a matter of fact, they did nothing of the kind. They only debated as to which side it would be better to assist, in the interest of trade.

Between the two, in the matters of fiendish cruelty and ruthless barbarity, there was nothing to choose. Foreign residents, until the settlements were actually threatened, generally sided with the Rebels. These latter craved the good-will of the Fang-Kwei and promised him all sorts of concessions. Under date of February 19, 1861, Mr. Consul Meadows, one of the ablest and best informed men in the East, addressed an elaborate dispatch to Lord John Russell, in which he argued the

claims of the Taepings. Fate was against them, however. The Allies determined that it would be better to aid the "Imps" (as the Rebels called them), and, step by step, they threw themselves into the cause. In 1862 they announced, among other things, their purpose of holding, and excluding the Taepings from, the "thirty-mile radius" around Shanghai; and this from no motive under heaven but the benefit of their pockets. The British policy was delightfully summarized by a vivacious officer of the Royal Engineers, whom I met at dinner in 1860. The tired volunteers, who had served at the Shanghai barricades in the burning sun, had just been relieved by a strong British force, under Brigadier Jephson, sent post haste from Sir Hope Grant's army before Peking. We rejoiced, but we wondered. "How is it," I asked my red-jacketed friend, "that, while you are fighting the Imperialists up there, you send down to help them here?"

"My dear fellow," he replied, "we always *pitch into the swells*. At the north the Imperialists are the swells, but down here, by Jove! the Rebels are, don't you know?—so we pitch into them both."

The hostility of the English and French hopelessly handicapped the Rebels; and, as we all know, they went down. The effective operations of the Chinese against them were initiated and conducted to an advanced stage by an American, General Ward, and concluded by an Englishman, General Gordon. The former began his work under crushing difficulties, and was at first obstructed, abused, and even threatened by the English, who came in time to respect and admire him; the latter had the moral and physical aid of Great Britain at his back, first, last, and all the time. Both fought for the supremacy of one set of Chinamen over another, and for material advantage; both were pure soldiers of fortune; both were des-

perately brave and desperately ambitious. One made no claim to goodness or philanthropy ; he only sought to

— “chase brave employments with a naked sword
Throughout the world.”

The other goes down to history as a saint and martyr. There are few enough of such in the world, and Americans may well join in singing his praises ; but they ought not to forget their own countryman.

I myself served several times at the defense of Shanghai in the company of as brave and good a set of fellows as ever lived, the Shanghai Volunteers. Inasmuch as we were primarily men of peace, and the treaties guaranteed us protection, we thought it hard that we must defend the miserable Chinamen as well as ourselves ; but I am sure we were all proud of having done so. I say *were* ; for of the infantry who manned the barricades, of the rangers who charged upon the Rebels at the Stone Bridge, of the artillerymen who, after long and laborious drill with the celebrated Light (Horse) Battery, fully held their own when brigaded with regulars, many are dead, and the rest are scattered in far-distant lands. Their deeds were unhonored and unsung, — but they came to know a good deal about the Taeping Rebellion.

On the afternoon of August 18, 1860, when things looked black for us, a man of slight figure approached me, as I stood at the Maloo Barrier. He had collected a few fighting men, and desired to place them where they would be of use ; and so, amid the roar of artillery, the rattle of musketry, and the shrieks of native fugitives, I first met General Ward. He was a man of excellent address, mild and gentle in manner, and as kind and warm-hearted as possible. His long hair and slight mustache were dark, and he habitually wore a blue coat tightly buttoned.

What a history was his ! He was a native of Salem, Massachusetts, and a sea-

man. He volunteered with the French in the Crimea, where he quarreled with his superior officer, and was allowed to resign. Returning to the United States, he adopted the peaceful occupation of a ship-broker in New York, but soon found it irksome. Hearing of an advantageous chance to buy some old ordnance in Mexico, he went thither and concluded the operation, on account of a New York acquaintance who furnished the capital ; but a second venture at Alvarado, on his own behalf, was not successful. Then followed an attempt to secure a grant of land in Sonora, and an intrigue for the possession of some church property.

Later, alone and poor, he crossed the continent on horseback, and reached California. There he heard of the troubles in China, and, taking ship, sailed for Shanghai. He knew a man named Gough, a so-called admiral in the Chinese Imperial service ; and under his advice he attempted the organization of a force of Manilamen, who proved worthless. Next he went to Takee, an eminent Chinese banker, and made with him the celebrated contract of which so much was said in years gone by. The party of the first part (Ward) was to carry by assault the important town of Sungkiang, not far from Shanghai, and then in the hands of the Rebels. For said service, the party of the second part (Takee) was to pay said party of the first part the sum of forty thousand dollars, cash, and to promptly dispatch men to *loot* or plunder said town. This contract was faithfully carried out. Ward hid some forty or fifty foreigners (including several free lances, who subsequently became famous) in cargo-boats, and landed them in the night at Sungkiang. They reached the moat, crossed it on a large beam, used said beam as a battering-ram, carried a guard-house, and turned the guns on the city. Those familiar with Chinese warfare will know

that it was quite natural for the Rebels to run when surprised in this manner, —and so they did. The city was captured and looted, and the cash was duly paid.

There was something strikingly original about this method of carrying on warfare, and it did not commend itself in large degree to foreigners in China. The English pronounced Ward a freebooter and a dangerous man; and an indiscreet naval captain proposed arresting him, but happily thought better of it. Nor were we Americans, I am bound to say, highly impressed at the outset by what we heard of our countryman.

Then for a time we lost sight of him; but he was not idle. He began drilling, in European style, a native force of, I think, *about one thousand men*. He gained the confidence of the Chinese, and secured the funds with which to import a steamer from the United States. It was in connection with this steamer that I came to know him well. I never saw him in action, nor except in the foreign settlement at Shanghai, but I learned greatly to admire him.

It was soon time for general appreciation and admiration to replace distrust and ignorant dislike. One day it was known that a powerful Rebel force was approaching Shanghai. Then came again the familiar call to arms, the preparations to receive women and children on board the steamers, the daily orders and bulletins.

Then, however, followed something new and surprising. The Rebels had, we heard, been met and defeated with tremendous slaughter, — and by whom? By a native force, admirably drilled, equipped, and disciplined, fighting by European tactics, and led to victory — complete, overwhelming victory against an enormous numerical superiority — by our lately despised American *filibustero*, General Ward.

Public opinion changed at a jump.

It must have been with a grim satisfaction that Ward awoke, the morning after this battle, to find himself famous; to receive the friendly congratulations of such a rare old paladin as Vice-Admiral Sir James Hope (who had two flagships sunk under him at the Peiho ports in 1859); and to find the allied commanders anxious not only to see in him the leader of the Chinese army of the future, but also to coöperate with him in all ways. Rarely was poetical justice more speedily done.

Next came eulogies. Sir John Michel, on resigning the British military command in China on February 28, 1862, spoke in the highest terms of Ward, and said he ought to have eight or ten thousand men. Sir Frederic Bruce, who at first had nothing but lofty contempt for Ward, wrote, on March 26, 1862, to Earl Russell, "In the Chinese force organized and led by Mr. Ward I see the nucleus and beginning of a military organization which may prove most valuable in the disturbed state of China."

It would be wearisome and useless to detail Ward's subsequent operations. It would be simply to give a list of uniform successes in the capture of a long array of Chinese towns with unpronounceable names. On July 21, 1862, Prince Kung himself wrote to Sir Frederic Bruce, "The native musketeer force formed at this place [Shanghai] by the foreigner Ward has been named by natives and foreigners the 'Ever Victorious.' So well established is its repute for valor and energy: wherever it fights it gains the day."

It was a terrible service. Ward spared neither himself nor those under him. The officers, conspicuous figures among the native privates, suffered fearfully. Ward was struck and wounded many times.

"Some day," he remarked to me, "I may be able to say Go! Now I must say Come!" Such a one found ready

followers and commanded prompt obedience. His chief of artillery was a man named Glasgow. He had been a non-commissioned officer in the British service, and so brave and skillful that promotion was twice in his grasp, only to be forfeited by excesses. On a memorable day, when he was with Ward, he had a battery in the open, pounding at the walls of a city. To him came his slight, boyish-looking commander.

"That battery is making bad practice," said he. "Advance it one hundred yards." The position was enfiladed by bullets, and men were dropping every moment; but from that order there was no appeal. Glasgow shrugged his shoulders, took a surreptitious pull at a flask, and gave the word. Another half hour, and he could cease firing, for the small man in the blue coat was in the breach, with the forlorn hope of the Ever Victorious Army.

In the autumn of 1862, Ward was at the zenith of his power. It is a fact that he had reached a position never attained by any other foreigner in the Chinese service. He had received unexampled promotion, and knew that upon the expected capture of Nankin he would be raised to the rank of a prince of the blood royal. It is also a fact that his consuming ambition aimed at the restoration of the old Chinese dynasty to the throne so long held by their Tartar conquerors.

He was a soldier to the ends of his fingers, and doubtless accepted all risks and counted all chances. He had faced death too often not to know how near it was to him from hour to hour, and that at any moment all his dreams, hopes, and ambitions might be as naught.

I have said that I saw him first in a stormy scene. My last sight of him was under far different circumstances. On a day late in September, 1862 (the 19th, I think), I looked up from my writing to see him standing by me. I could not think of this smiling, amiable

man as a great commander and a future ruler. I only remembered then that when I, a few months before, lay sick of that terrible Shanghai fever, which is said to combine all the bad features of other fevers with a few of its own, he had taken time from his cares and duties to come and sit by a young countryman's bedside. He asked me to lend him my Arab horse, which of course I was glad to do.

Later in the afternoon, walking in a street of the settlement, I met him, sitting erect in the saddle. We stopped, and I was patting my horse's neck and talking to the general, when the impulse seized me to speak to him as I did.

"General," I said, "you are taking fearful risks. You may be killed at any moment. In such case, what will become of your property and affairs? Let me find you a confidential secretary, or some one in whose hands you can trust your great interests." His blue coat was buttoned tightly over his chest. He smiled as he pointed with his right hand to the outline of a small book in his left breast pocket, and then touching it said, "Oh, it is all here."

I bade him farewell, and never saw him again. About forty-eight hours later, the town of Tsekie, not far from Ningpo, was attacked by his forces. Co-operating with him was a gallant and intelligent British sailor, Captain Roderick Dew, R. N., of H. M. S. *Encounter*. As a contrast to the shabby treatment which Ward's memory has had from historians and biographers, let us see what this brave man, who knew more of that of which he spoke than all of them put together, wrote to Sir James Hope from Ningpo on September 23, 1862:—

"It is now my painful duty to inform you that General Ward, while directing the assault, fell, mortally wounded. The Hardy brought him down the same evening to Ningpo, and he died the next morning in Dr. Parker's house.

"During a short acquaintance with General Ward, I have learnt to appreciate him much, and I fear his death will cast a gloom over the Imperial cause in China, of which he was the stay and prop."

So perished this remarkable man. Of the deeds of his successor in the command of the army I need not speak. These deeds are worthy of record, and those who have chronicled them are to be impeached not for what they have said about Gordon, but for what they have left unsaid about Ward.

In this paper I have tried to make no statement which is not susceptible of proof by documents or living witnesses. Such support I have not for the assertion, which I nevertheless believe to be strictly true, that Gordon, who had served at times in the staff with Ward, and greatly admired him, declared, on succeeding him in command, that he "had but to follow where the American soldier had led." Whether he said so or not, however, that is what he did. The creator and the first great commander of the Ever Victorious Army was Frederic T. Ward. That he would have taken Nankin and speedily crushed the Taeping Rebellion is beyond all question; and he left to Gordon a task far easier than that which he had himself accomplished.

It is difficult to withhold praise from brave deeds, even if we be not wholly in sympathy with the cause in which they are done. While dwelling upon the striking and dramatic character of Ward's achievements, and having only admiration for the many excellent traits of his character, a conscientious historian must guard himself from approval, actual or implied, of the entry of any right-minded and self-respecting foreigner into the Chinese naval or military service. To this day we maintain the "ex-territorial jurisdiction" in that country, because no one would dream of trusting the lives or liberties of Amer-

icans to the mercies of Chinamen even in time of peace. How much more dreadful must it be to have part or lot with them in time of war! Both Ward and Gordon were brave, and in a way great men; but in China they were engaged in a miserable business, and we must like and praise them in spite of this business, not on account of it. They waded to their ends through the blood of thousands of men who had done them no harm, and whom no sentiment of patriotism nor love of liberty impelled them to oppose. They were associated, too, with Imperialist authorities and forces, for whose evil deeds they were of course not responsible, but who were sorry allies for honorable men. The story has been told of the cruel murder of the Wongs, or rebel chiefs, who had surrendered to Gordon under his pledge that their lives should be spared, and of his rage and despair thereat. This was but an isolated case; and so horrible were the atrocities connected with the suppression of the Rebellion that one must shrink from pursuing the subject.

Ward, as I have said, must have known what desperate chances he took from day to day, and it was doubtless a consolation to him to think of the honor in which his name would be held and the wealth which he would leave to his family, should death suddenly lay low his hopes of earthly power and greatness. Let us see how both his fame and his fortune fared at the hands of the cowardly and imbecile dynasty of which he had been the "stay and prop," and in whose service he sacrificed his life.

They gave him a gorgeous funeral at Sungkiang; and it is understood that unprecedented honors were conferred upon his lifeless remains when they were allowed to rest in the inner sanctuary of the Confucian temple. Then, with promptness and thoroughness, they proceeded to deal with his property,—

with the houses and lands, the flocks and herds, the shekels of gold and silver, with which they had lavishly endowed him.

When taken on board H. M. S. Hardy, mortally wounded, Ward made the following dying statement, —

“The Taotai of Shanghai owes me 110,000 taels. Takee also owes me 30,000 taels, — 140,000 taels.

“I wish my wife to have 50,000 taels, and all remains to be between my brother and sister.

“I wish Admiral Sir James Hope and Mr. Burlingame to be my executors.”

These words were taken down, and witnessed by Archibald G. Bogle, Lieutenant R. N., commanding, and John Colter, Boatswain. When I spoke to Ward, two days before he died, I warned him all in vain. The Taotai (Governor) and the excellent Takee shrugged their shoulders in pitying contempt. *Wah* (Ward) was a great man, indeed, but, by the blessed memory of Confucius, he did but jest when he spoke of their owing him money. The United States consul-general made a gallant fight, and compelled the Chinamen to refer the matter to arbitration. Curiously enough, I was myself selected as an arbitrator on behalf of the estate. When I met the gentleman named by the Chinese, I had vividly in mind the little book in Ward's pocket, wherein “it all was.” Of this book no trace could be found; nor could a scintilla of evidence on behalf of the estate be brought to light. Our almond-eyed friends were then, as always, “peculiar for ways that are dark and tricks that are vain.” Of the fortune which Ward was known to possess, we — American minister (Mr. Burlingame, who took much interest in the matter), consul-general, administrators, arbitrators, rel-

atives, friends — could find but a pitiful and beggarly remnant. Between six and seven years after Ward died I was making the journey from Hong Kong to Shanghai in the U. S. S. *Monocacy*. As fellow passenger I had the American minister, the lamented J. Ross Browne, and we stopped at the open coast ports. At Ningpo, among the callers on board the ship was an ex-officer of Ward's army, then in command of a so-called Anglo-Chinese force. It occurred to me to ask him if he knew what became of the now celebrated little book. He drew me to the rear of the cabin, and spoke in low tones.

“I can tell you,” said he. “I was guarding the general's body. The blue coat which you remember lay on a chair, and the book was in the breast pocket. Colonel —, my superior officer, relieved me. The book was never seen again, but *I saw Colonel — buy exchange for forty thousand dollars.*”

If my Anglo-Chinese friend spoke truly (and he was a man of most excellent reputation), that poor little book was a very cheap purchase for the Chinese government at \$40,000.

During the late Franco-Chinese war I was more than once pained to hear men who ought to know better talk about seeking service under the dragon flag. This is no place in which to say the very much that might be said as to the wretchedness of such service, and the pirate's fate which they would court, and very probably meet, when encountering a foreign foe; but they might take a lesson from the history of Ward. Not one in ten thousand of them could at all approach him in military genius, in courage, and in resources, or do anything like what he did. Yet the Rebels took his life, the Imperialists took his money, and Gordon's biographers took his fame.

A. A. Hayes.

IN THE CLOUDS.

III.

THE iterative echoes of the shooting-match, sharply jarring from mountain to mountain, from crag to crag, evoked a faint reverberation even in the distant recesses of Wild-Cat Hollow. Alethea Sayles, sitting at her loom on the porch of the little log cabin, paused, the shuttle motionless in her deft hand, to listen.

All aloof from the world was Wild-Cat Hollow, a limited depression, high up on the vast slope of the Great Smoky. It might have seemed some secret nook, some guarded fastness, so closely did the primeval wilderness encompass it, so jealously did the ridgy steeps rise about it on every hand. It was invisible from the valley below, perhaps too from the heights above. And only a glimpse was vouchsafed to it of the world from which it was sequestered: beyond a field, in a gap of the minor ridges superimposed upon the mountain, where the dead and girdled trees stood in spectral ranks among the waving corn, might be seen a strip of woods in the cove below, a glint of water, a stately file of lofty peaks vanishing along the narrow skyey vista. Sunrise and sunset, — the Hollow knew them not: a distant mountain might flare with a fantasy of color, a star of abnormal glister might palpitate with some fine supernal thrill of dawn; but for all else, it only knew that the night came early and the day broke late, and in many ways it had meagre part in the common lot.

The little log cabin, set among its scanty fields, its weed-grown "gyarden spot," and its few fruit trees, was poor of its kind. The clapboards of its roof were held in place by poles laid athwart them, with large stones piled between to weight them down. The chimney was

of clay and sticks, and leaned away from the wall. In a corner of the rickety rail fence a gaunt, razor-backed hog lay grunting drowsily. Upon a rude scaffold tobacco leaves were suspended to dry. Even the martin-house was humble and primitive: merely a post with a cross-bar, from which hung a few large gourds with a cavity in each, whence the birds were continually fluttering. Behind it all, the woods of the steep ascent seemed to touch the sky. The place might give a new meaning to exile, a new sentiment to loneliness.

Seldom it heard from the world, — so seldom that when the faint rifle-shots sounded in the distance a voice from within demanded eagerly, "What on yearth be that, Lethe?"

"Shootin' fur beef, down in the cove, I reckon, from thar firin' so constant," drawled Alethea.

"Ye dunno," said the unseen, unexpectedly, derisive of this conjecture. "They mought be a-firin' thar bullets inter each other. Nobody kin count on a man by hisself, but a man in company with a rifle air jes' a outdacious, jubious critter."

Alethea looked speculatively down at the limited section of the cove visible from the Hollow above. Her hazel eyes were bright, but singularly grave. The soft sheen of her yellow hair served to definitely outline the shape of her head against the brown logs of the wall. The locks lay not in ripples, but in massive undulations, densely growing above her forehead, and drawn in heavy folds into a knot at the back of her head. She had the delicate complexion and the straight, refined lineaments so incongruous with the poverty-stricken mountaineer, so commonly seen among the class. Her homespun dress was of a dull brown. About her throat, of ex-

quisite whiteness, was knotted a kerchief of the deepest saffron tint. Her hands and arms — for her sleeves were rolled back — were shapely, but rough and sun-embrowned. She had a deliberate, serious manner that very nearly approached dignity.

"I hopes they ain't," she said, still listening. "I hopes they ain't a-shootin' of one another."

"Waal, I'm a-a-thinkin' the lead would n't be wasted on some of 'em," said the acrid voice. "Piomingo Cove could make out mighty well 'thout some o' them boys ez rip an' rear aroun' down thar ez a constancy. I dunno ez I'd feel called on ter mourn fur Mink Lorey enny. An' I reckon the cove could spare him."

Looking through the window close by the bench of the loom, Alethea could see the interior of the room, rudely furnished and with the perennial fire of the wide chimney-place slowly smouldering in a bed of ashes. A half-grown Shanghai pullet was pecking about the big flat stones of the hearth in a premature and unprescient proximity to the pot. There were two bedsteads of a lofty build, the thick feather beds draped with quilts of such astounding variety of color as might have abashed the designers of Joseph's coat. The scrupulous cleanliness and orderliness of the place were as marked a characteristic as its poverty. A sharp-featured woman of fifty sat in a low chair by the fire, wearing a blue-checked homespun dress, a pink calico sun-bonnet, and a cob-pipe, — the last was so constantly sported that it might be reckoned an article of attire. She was not so old as she seemed, but the loss of her teeth and her habit of crouching over the fire gave her the cronish aspect common to the elderly women of the region.

Alethea hesitated. Then, with a deprecatory manner, she said in her soft contralto drawl, "He ain't down 'mongst the boys in Piomingo Cove none."

Mrs. Sayles sneered. "Ye b'lieve that?"

"He be a-herdin' cattle along o' Ben Doaks on Piomingo Bald."

Mrs. Sayles looked at her step-daughter and puffed a copious wreath of smoke for reply.

"Reuben tole me that hisself, — an' so did Ben Doaks," persisted Alethea.

"*Mink*, I calls him, an' nuthin' shorter," said Mrs. Sayles, obdurately, — as if anything could be shorter. "But ef Ben Doaks gin the same word, it mus' be a true one."

Alethea flushed. "I know ye air sot agin Reuben, but I'd believe his word agin enny other critter's in the mountings."

"Set a heap o' store on him, don't ye?" said Mrs. Sayles, sarcastically. "An' when he kem a-courtin' ye, an' 'peared crazy 'bout'n ye, an' ye an' him war promised ter marry, ye could n't quit jowin' at him fur one minit. Ye plumb beset him ter do like *ye* thought war right, — ez ef *he* hed no mo' conscience o' his own 'n that pullet thar, an' hed n't never hearn on salvation. An' ye'd beg an' beg him ter quit consortin' with the moonshiners; an' a-drinkin' o' apple-jack an' sech; an' a-rollickin' round the kentry; an' layin' folkses fences down on the groun'; an' liftin' thar gates off'n the hinges; an' ketchin' thar geese, an' pickin' 'em, an' scatterin' thar feathers in the wind, an' sendin' 'em squawkin' home; an' a-playin' kyerds; an' a-whoopin', an' ridin', an' racin'. An' ye war always a-preachin' at him, an' tryin' ter straighten him out, an' make him suthin' he war never born ter be."

Her pipe was smoked out. She drew from her pocket a fragment of tobacco leaf, which was apparently not sufficiently cured for satisfactory smoking, for she laid it on the hot ashes on the hearth and watched it as it dried, her meditative eyes shaded by her pink calico sun-bonnet.

"Naw, sir!" she continued, as she

crumpled the bit of leaf with her fingers and crowded it into the bowl of her pipe, "I hev never liked Mink. I ain't denyin' it, nuther. I ain't gamesome enough ter git tuk up with sech ways ez his'n. Mighty few folks air! But I could see reason in the critter when he 'lowed one day, right hyar by this very chimbley-place, — he sez, sez 'he, 'Lethe, ye don't like nuthin' I do or say, an' I'm durned ef I kin see how ye like *me*!'"

Alethea's serious, lustrous eyes, looking in at the window, saw not the uncouth interior of her home, — no! As in a vision, irradiated by some enchantment, she beheld the glammers of the idyllic past, fluctuating, waning, as she met her step-mother's light gray eye.

Even to Alethea, herself, it sometimes seemed that she might be content more lightly. Her imbuement with those practical ideas of right and wrong, the religion of deeds rather than the futilely pious fervors of the ignorant mountaineers, in which creed and act were often widely at variance, was as mysterious an endowment as the polarity of the loadstone. She was not introspective, however; she never even wondered that she should speak openly, without fear or favor, as she felt impelled. Had she lived in an age when every inward monition was esteemed the voice of the Lord, she might have fancied that she was called to warn the world of the errors of its ways. Her sedulous conscience, the austere gravity of her spirit, her courage, her steadfastness, her fine intelligence, even her obdurate self-will, might all have had assertive values in those long bygone days. As an historic woman, she might have founded an order, or juggled with state-craft, or perished a martyr, or rode, enthusiast, in the ranks of battle. By centuries belated in Wild-Cat Hollow, she was known as a "perverted, cross-grained gal" and "a meddlin' body," and the "widder Jessup" had much sympathy for having

in a misguided moment married Alethea's father. Sometimes the Hollow, distorted though its conscience was, experienced a sort of affright to recognize its misdeeds in her curt phrase. It could only ask in retort who set her up to judge of her elders, and regain its wonted self-complacency as best it might. Even her own ascetic rectitude lacked some quality to commend it.

"I can't find no reg'lar fault with Lethe," her step-mother was wont to say, "'ceptin' she's jes' — Lethe."

Mrs. Sayles's voice, pursuing the subject, recalled the girl's attention: —

"An' ye tired his patience out, — the critter hed mo' 'n I gin him credit fur, — an' druv him off at last through wantin' him ter be otherwise. An' now folks 'low ez him an' Elviry Crosby air a-goin' ter marry. I'll be bound she don't harry him none 'bout'n his ways, kase her mother tole me ez she air mighty nigh a idjit 'bout'n him, an' hev turned off Peter Rood, who she hed promised ter marry, though the weddin' day hed been set, an' Pete air wuth forty sech ez Mink."

Alethea turned away abruptly to her work, and as she lightly tossed the shuttle to and fro she heard, amidst the creaking of the treadle and the thumping of the batten, her step-mother's persistent voice droning on: —

"An' so ye hed yer say, an' done yer preachin', an' he profited by it. I reckon he 'lowed ef ye jawed that-away afore ye war married, thar war no yearthly tellin' what ye *could* say arterward. An' now," rising to the dramatic, "hyar kems along Ben Doaks, powerful peart an' good enough ter satisfy eunnybody; perlite, an' saaft-spoken, an' good-lookin', an' respected by all, an' ready ter marry ye ter-morrer, ef ye'll say the word. He owns cattle-critters" —

"An' sheep," put in an unexpected voice. A dawdling young woman, with an opaque blue eye and a pretty, inane

soft face, had stepped into the back door, and heard the last words of the monologue which apparently had been often enough repeated to admit of no doubt as to its tenor. She had a slatternly, ill-adjusted look, and a snuff-brush in the corner of her mouth.

"An' herds cattle in the summer season," said Mrs. Sayles.

"He hev a good name 'mongst the cattle-owners," observed the young woman.

"An' hev bought him right smart land," added Mrs. Sayles.

"Down in Piomingo Cove! not h'isted up on the side o' the mounting, like we-uns!" exclaimed the young woman, with more enthusiasm than one would have believed possible from the flaccid indifference of her manner.

"An' he put in all the fair weather las' winter a-raisin' him a house," Mrs. Sayles pursued.

"An' he 'lowed ter me ez every log war hefted, an' every pat o' clay war daubed on the chinkin', with the thought o' Lethe!" cried the other.

"He hev been plantin' round thar some, a'ready," said the old woman.

"Corn, pumpkins, wheat, an' ter-bacco," supplemented the daughter-in-law.

"An' he hev got him some bee-gums, — I never hearn how many bees," said Mrs. Sayles.

"Down in Piomingo Cove!" the climax of worldly prosperity.

"Laws-a-massy!" exclaimed Mrs. Sayles, with a freshened realization of despair. "Lethe ain't never goin' ter live in it! I dunno what ails the gal! She takes a notion ez she likes a man with sech ways ez she can't abide, an' she quar'ls with him mornin' an' evenin'. An' then when a feller kems along, with all sort'n good ways ez she likes, she don't like *him*! Gals never acted similar whenst I war young. I 'low it mus' be the wiles o' Satan on the onruly generation."

"Lethe 'pears ter think the Lord hev app'inted the rocky way," said the other. "She be always a-doin' of what's the hardest. An' she can't quit nowhar this side o' nuthin'! Ef ever she's condemned ter Torment she 'll kerry a leetle kindlin' along, fur fear the fire won't be het up hot enough ter burn her fur her sins."

She was silent during a momentary activity of the snuff-brush.

"But ef I war you-uns, Lethe, an' hed the chance o' livin' in my own house all ter myself" — she began anew.

"Plenty o' elbow-room," interrupted Mrs. Sayles; "not all jammed tergether, like we-uns hyar."

Alethea, aware of her lack of logic, made an effort to effect a diversion.

"I never hearn o' folks a-grudgin' a gal house-room, an' wantin' her ter go off an' marry fur a place ter bide," she said, pausing in her weaving.

Mrs. Sayles, who piqued herself, not without some reason, on her kindness to her step-daughter, having her prosaic welfare, at least, at heart, retorted in righteous wrath. "An' nobody ain't never said no sech word," she declared, with amplest negation. "Grudgin' ye house-room, — shucks!"

"One less would n't be no improve-*ment* ter we-uns, Lethe," said the amiable daughter-in-law. "We air jes' like a hen settin' on forty aigs: she kin kiver 'em ez well ez thirty-nine."

"But I ain't got no medjure o' patience with this latter-day foolishness!" said Mrs. Sayles, tartly. "Whenst I war young, gals married thar fust chance, — mought hev been afeard they'd never git another," she added, impersonally, that others might profit by this contingency. "An' I don't keer much nohow fur these hyar lonesome single wimmen. Ye never kin git folks ter b'lieve ez they ever *hed* enny chance."

"Laws-a-massy, Lethe," the daughter-in-law reassured her, still vaguely serene, "I ain't wantin' ter git shet o' ye,

nohow. Ye hev tuk mo' keer o' my chill'n than I hev, an' helped me powerful. It's well ye done it, too, fur Jacob Jessup ain't sech ez kin content me with Wild-Cat Hollow. I war raised in the cove!"

"Thar's L'onidas now, axin' fur suth-in' ter eat," said the uncompromising Alethea, whose voice was the slogan of duty.

The loom occupied a full third of the space on the little porch; two or three rickety chairs stood there, besides; a yoke hung against the wall; the spinning-wheel was shadowed by the jack-bean vines, whose delicate lilac blooms embellished the little cabin, clambering to its roof; on the floor were several splint baskets. A man was languidly filling them with peaches, which he brought in a wheel-barrow from the trees farther down on the slope. He was tall and stalwart, but his beard was gray, and he had assumed the manner and all the exemptions of extreme age; occasionally he did a little job like this with an air of laborious precision. He was accompanied both in going and coming by his step-son's daughter, a tow-headed, six-year-old girl, and a gaunt yellow dog. The little girl's voice, dictatorial and shrill, was on the air continuously, broken only by the low, acquiescent refrain of the old man's replies, carefully adjusted to meet her propositions. The dog paced silently and discreetly along, his appreciation of the placid pleasure of the occasion plainly manifested in his quiet demeanor and his slightly wagging tail. His decorum suffered a lapse when, as they came close to the porch, he observed Leonidas issue from the door, — a small boy of four, a plump little caricature of a man, in blue cotton trousers, an unbleached cotton shirt, and a laughably small pair of knitted suspenders. He held in his hand a piece of fat meat several inches square, considered in the mountains peculiarly wholesome for

small boys, and a reliable assistant in "gittin' yer growth."

Tige paused not for reflection. He sprang upon the porch, capering gleefully about, and uttering shrill yelps of discovery with much his triumphant manner in treeing a coon. Leonidas shared the common human weakness of overestimating one's own size. He thought to hold the booty out of Tige's reach, and extended his arm at full length, whereupon the dog, with an elastic bound and extreme nicety of aim, caught it and swallowed it at a single gulp. Leonidas winked very fast; then, realizing his bereavement, burst into noisy tears. Tige's facetiousness had a discordantly sudden contrast in the serious howl he emitted as he was kicked off the porch by the child's father. This was an unkempt young fellow just emerging from the shed-room. He had a red face and swollen eyes, and there were various drowsy intimations in his manner that he was just roused from sleep. No natural slumber, one might have judged; the odor of whiskey still hung about him, and he walked with an unsteady gait to the end of the porch and sat down on the edge of the floor, his feet dangling over the ground. Tige, who had sought refuge beneath the house, and was giving vent to sundry sobbing wheezes, thrust his head out to lick his master's boots. Upon this mollifying demonstration, the man looked down with the lenient expression of one who loves dogs. "What ails ye, then," he reasoned, "ter be sech a fool as ter 'low ye kin be let ter rob a child the size o' L'onidas thar?"

And forthwith the mercurial Tige came out, cheerful as before.

In the limited interval when Leonidas — who had been supplied with another piece of meat, but still howled with cal-low persistence because of the affronts offered by Tige — was fain to pause for breath, and between the alternate creaking of the treadle of the loom and the

thumping of the batten, the man's ear caught, too, that unwonted stir in the air, the sound of consecutive rifle-shots.

"Look-a-hyar," he cried, springing to his feet, "what's that a-goin' on down in the cove? Lethe, stop trompin' on that thar n'isy treadle, so ez I kin listen! Quit yellin', ye catamount!" with a vengeful glance at the small boy.

But the grief of Leonidas was imperative, and he abated nothing.

Jacob Jessup stood for an instant baffled. Then suddenly he put both hands to his mouth, and roused all the echoes of Wild-Cat Hollow with a ringing halloo.

"Who be ye a-hollerin' at?" asked his mother from her nook in the chimney corner.

"I 'lowed I viewed a man up yander 'mongst them woods, — mought be one o' the herders."

Alethea's foot paused on the treadle. Her uplifted hand stayed the batten, the other held the shuttle motionless. She turned her head, and with a sudden rich flush on her cheek and a deep light in her lifted eyes looked up toward the forests that rose in vast array upon the steep slopes of the ridge until they touched the sky. Accustomed to the dusky shadows of their long avenues, she discerned a mounted figure in their midst. There was a tense moment of suspense. The man had wheeled his horse on hearing the halloo. He seemed to hesitate; then in lieu of response he took his way down the hill toward the cabin. The trees were fewer on the edge of the clearing. Before he drew rein by the rail fence she had turned back to the loom, and once more the shuttle winged its short, clumsy flights, like a fledgeling bird, from one side to the other, and the treadle creaked, and the batten thumped, and she spared not an instant from her work.

For it was only Ben Doaks dismounting, glad of a pretext, throwing the reins over a projecting rail of the fence, and tramping up to the house.

"Howdy," he observed comprehensively. And the family, meditatively eyeing him, responded, "Howdy."

"Keep yer health, Ben?" the old woman demanded. She had come to the door, taking a gourd of water from a pail which was on a shelf without. She drank leisurely, and tossed the surplus water from the gourd across the porch, where it spattered the half-grown pullet, which shunted off suddenly with a loud, shocked exclamation, as if it sported half a score of ruffled petticoats.

"Yes m'," drawled Ben, seating himself on the floor of the porch, near Jacob, "I keeps toler'ble well."

"I dunno how ye do it, — livin' off'n what ye cooks yersef." She manifested a truly mundane interest in the eligible young man. She did not return to her chair by the fireside, but sat down on the doorstep. "I 'd look ter be p'isoned ef I hed ter live on yer cookin'."

"Waal, I reckon ye could n't put up with it right handy, seein' the sorter table ye set out hyar."

Was the old woman more than human, to be untouched by this sincere tribute?

"Ye oughter kem down hyar oftener ye do, Ben, an' bide ter meals," she said, her spectacles turned upon him with a certain grave luminosity. "We'll make ye powerful welcome ter sech vittles ez we hev got. Ye ain't been hyar fur a right smart time."

"I know that, but somehow I never kin feel right welcome comin' so often," said Ben. He had leaned back against the post of the porch. He could look, without moving, into Alethea's grave, absorbed face as she worked.

"Count o' Lethe? Shucks! thar ain't but one fool hyar. Mought kem ter see the rest o' we-uns."

Alethea's face flushed to the roots of her hair. Ben Doaks, dismayed to be the indirect occasion of her anger, and secretly affronted by the breach of decorum which he considered involved in

this open mention of his bootless suit, hastened to change the subject. "Did ye hev a word ter say ter me, Jacob?" he asked. "Ye 'lowed, day 'fore yis-tiddy, ye wanted ter sell yer steer."

There was now no sound from the cove. The burnished glisters of the sunshine hung above it almost materially visible, holding in suspension a gauzy haze, through which the purple mountains were glamorous and darkly vague. Jacob, his senses yet in thrall, could hardly recall the question he had desired to ask concerning the rifle-shots that had trivially jarred its perfect serenity.

"Yes, yes," he said, hastily. "Buck, ye know," with the manner of introduction. "Yander he be." He pointed to a gaunt dun-colored ox, with long horns and a joyless mien, standing within a few feet of a rude trough which the spring branch kept supplied.

"Jacob," said Alethea, turning her head with a knitted brow, "ef ye sell Buck, how air we goin' ter plough our craps? How air we goin' ter live along?"

"Laws-a-massy!" exclaimed Mrs. Sayles. "I ain't s'prised none ef the man ez marries Lethe at last will find out he hev got more 'n he bargains fur. She jes' ups an' puts inter her elders' affairs ez brash ez ef hern war the only brains in the fambly. Jacob 's a-savin' ter buy a horse, child. Yer dad 'lowed Jacob mought use his jedgmint 'bout all the crappin', bein' ez yer dad 's old an' ain't long fur this worl'. So Jacob hev determinated ter buy a horse. Who wants ter work a steer when they kin hev a horse?"

Doaks looked intently at Alethea, loyally eager to range himself on her side. She was oblivious of his presence now; every faculty was on the alert in her single-handed contest against the family.

"Whar 's the money he hev saved?" she demanded.

Her step-brother seemed frowzier than ever, as he lifted his eyebrows in vain cogitation for an answer.

"Ye shet up," he said, in triumphant substitution; "ye ain't no kin ter me."

Alethea, all lacking in the bland and mollifying feminine influences that subtly work their ends in seeming submission, bluntly spoke her inmost thought:

"Ez long ez thar 's a moonshine still a-runnin' somewhar round Pioningo Cove Jacob ain't goin' ter save no money."

"Thar ain't no still round hyar ez I knows on," said Doaks, in surprise. "Over yander in Eskaquia Cove thar air a bonded still, I know."

"That bonded still hev ter sell wholesale, hevin' no license otherwise," she retorted, "an' Jacob hain't saved enough yit ter buy by the five gallon. An' though he may 'pear sober ter you-uns, he don't ter me."

Jacob bore her scathing glance with an admirable equanimity.

"Ye shet up, Lethe; ye dunno nuthin' 'bout stills, bonded or no. Look-a-hyar, Ben, don't ye want ter buy Buck? See him thar?"

"I don't want him," said Ben.

Jacob turned fiercely on Alethea. "Why n't ye hold yer jaw, ef ye know how; ye have done spiled my trade. Look-a-hyar, Ben," he said alluringly, "it 's this hyar steer,"—there was but one,— "this hyar steer; he 's wuth money. I tell ye," he vociferated, with a drunken wag of his head, "Buck 's a good steer. I dunno ef I kin git my corsent ter trade Buck off, no-ways. Buck 's plumb like a member o' the fambly. I tell ye we-uns fairly dote on Buck."

"Waal, I don't want him. Older 'n enny of ye, ain't he?" drawled Ben. He was not a dull fellow, and he had taken his cue. He would decry the ox and forego his bargain, a consciously hopeless sacrifice to his affection.

Jacob straightened himself with an effort, and stared at his interlocutor.

"Who? Buck? Why, Buck ain't much older than L'onidas thar." He waved his hand toward the boy, who had perched on the bench of the loom beside Alethea. Now and then she patted his shoulder, which effort at consolation he received with a distinct crescendo; he had begun to relish the sound of his vocal performance, evidently attempting new and bizarre effects.

"L'onidas air about four year old, ain't he, Mrs. Jessup?" Doaks asked of the young matron, who seemed placidly regardless how the negotiation should terminate.

"I b'lieve he's 'bout four," she said, without animation.

"Waal, he be toler'ble bouncin' fur that," said Doaks, looking with the eye of speculation at the boy, as if he were about to offer a bid for Leonidas, "but I kin see a heap o' diff'unce 'twixt his size an' Buck's."

The drunken man turned and stared at the diminutive person on the bench. "Waal," he said in a low-spirited way, as if he must yield the point, "I never knowed ye wanted a steer o' that size. Would n't be much use ter ye. Our'n ain't."

"He 'pears sorter jubious in his temper. Does he hook?"

"Who? Buck?" — with an air of infinite amazement. "Why, Buck's ez saaft ez L'onidas thar."

As Leonidas was just now extremely loud, the comparison was hardly felicitous.

"I don't want no work-ox, nohow," said Doaks. "I want cattle ter fatten."

"Jes' try Buck. He 'll lay on fat fur ev'y ear o' corn fedded him. Ye dunno Buck. He hain't laid on much yit, kase, ye see," — Jessup's voice took on a confidential intonation, although it was not lowered because of the roaring Leonidas, — "we-uns ain't hed much corn ter feed ter Buck, bein' back'ard

las' year. The drought cotched our late corn, an' so Buck, though he worked it, he never got none sca'cely. An' that's why he ain't no fatter 'n he be."

Logical of Buck, but it availed him as little as the logic of misfortunes profits the rest of the world.

Alethea had risen and turned half round, leaning against the great clumsy frame of the loom. Her posture displayed her fine height; her supple figure was slight, as became her age, but with a suggestion of latent strength in every curve. There was something strangely inconsistent in the searching, serious expression of her grave brown eyes and the lavish endowment of her beauty, which seemed as a thing apart from her. Perhaps only Ben Doaks noted, or rather felt in a vague, unconscious way, the fascination of its detail: the glister of her dense yellow hair against the brown wall, where a string of red peppers hung, heightening the effect; the glimpse of her white throat under the saffron kerchief; the lithe grace of her figure, about which her sober-hued dress fell in straight folds. To the home-folks she gave other subjects to contemplate.

"Naw," she drawled, in her soft, low voice, whose intonation only suggested sarcasm, "we did n't plant much o' nuthin' this year, — hed no seed sca'cely, an' nuthin' ter trade fur 'em. The plenties' o' ennythin' roun' hyarabouts war bresh whiskey, an' as Buck don't drink it he ain't no fatter 'n he be."

"Waal," said Doaks, feeling all the discomforts incident to witnessing a family row, incompetent to participate by reason of non-membership, "I 'lowed the mountings hed in an' about done with moonshinin', considerin' the way the raiders kep' up with 'em. It's agin' the law, ye know."

"I ain't a-keerin' fur the law," said Alethea loftily. "The law air jes' the men's foolishness, an' they air a-changin' of it forever till 't ain't got no constancy."

Ef I war minded ter break it I'd feel no hendrance in the sperit."

Her eyes met his. He looked vaguely away. Certainly there was no reasoning on this basis.

"'T ain't right," she said suddenly. "Jacob sleeps an' drinks his time away, an' don't do his sheer o' the work. I done *all* the plowin' this year, — me an' Buck, — an' I ain't one o' the kind ez puts up with sech. I ain't a Injun woman, like them at Quallatown. Pete Rood, — he hev been over thar, — he 'lows the women do *all* the crappin' while the men go huntin'. I'll kerry my e-end o' the log, but when the t'other e-end draps 'pears ter me I oughter drap mine."

"What ye goin' ter do, Lethe?" said the old woman. "Goin' ter take ter idlin' an' drinkin' bresh whiskey, too?"

She laughed, but she sneered as well.

Alethea, all unmoved by her ridicule, drawled calmly on: "I don't know nuthin' 'bout bresh whiskey, an' I ain't idled none, ez the rest o' you-uns know; but ef Jacob don't do his stent, nex' year thar 'll be less corn hyar than this."

It was hard for Doaks to refrain from telling her that there was a home ready for her, and one to share it who would work for both. Only futility restrained him. He flushed to the roots of his light brown hair, and as a resource he drew out a clasp knife and absently whittled a chip as he listened.

"Waal, wimmen hev ter holp men along with thar work wunst in a while," said Mrs. Sayles patronizingly. "Ye 'll find that out, child, whenst ye git married."

"Ef I war married," said Alethea, severely contemplating the contingency, — and Doaks felt a vague thrill of jealousy, — "I'd do his work ef he war aillin' ennywise, but not ter leave him in the enjoyment o' bresh whiskey."

"Ye shet up, Lethe," said Jacob, at last nettled. "Ye ain't no kin ter me, — jes' a step-sister, — an' ye ain't got

no right ter jow at me. Ye dunno nuthin' 'bout bresh whiskey. Ye dunno whar it's made nor who makes it."

"Ef I did" — she began abruptly.

He looked up at her with a sober dismay on his face.

"Don't go ter 'lowin' ye'd gin the word ter the revenuers?" he said.

Mrs. Sayles dropped her knitting in her lap.

"Look-a-hyar, Lethe," she exclaimed, "it's ez much ez yer life's wuth ter say them words!"

"I ain't said 'em," declared Alethea. Yet she was plainly ill at ease afterward. She looked vaguely away with absent eyes, disregarding Jacob's growling defense of himself, which consisted in good measure of animadversion on people who faulted their elders and gals who could n't hold their tongues. Suddenly she stepped from the porch.

"Whar be ye goin', Lethe?" demanded Mrs. Sayles, ruthlessly interrupting Jacob's monologue.

"Ter hunt up that thar lam'," replied Alethea calmly, as if nothing else had been under discussion. "I ain't seen nuthin' of it ter-day, an' some o' the chill'n — I b'lieve 't war Joe — 'lowed its dam war up yander nigh Boke's spring yestiddy, actin' sorter cur'us, an' I reckon suthin' 's happened ter it."

Doaks looked after her as she went, tempted to follow. She took her way down the path along the zigzag rails of the fence. All the corners were rank with wild flowers, among which her golden head showed from time to time as in a wreath. She was soon without the limits of Wild-Cat Hollow. More than once she paused as she went, holding her hands above her eyes, and looking at the vast array of mountains on every side. A foreign land to her, removed even from vague speculation; she only saw how those august summits lifted themselves into the sky, how the clouds, weary-winged, were fain to rest upon them. There was a vague blur-

ring at the horizon-line, for a shower was succeeded by mist. The woods intervened presently; the long stretches of the majestic avenues lay before her, all singularly open, cleared of leaves and undergrowth by the fiery besom of the annual conflagration. It was very silent: once only she heard the shrill trilling of a tree-frog; and once the insistent clamor of a locust broke out close at hand, vibrating louder and louder and dying away, to be caught up antiphonally in the distance. Often she noted the lightning-scathed trees, the fated of the forest, writhen and blanched and spectral among their flourishing kindred. There were presently visible at the end of the long leafy vista other dead trees: their blight was more prosaic; they stood girdled and white in an abandoned field that lay below the slope on which she had paused. A broken rotting rail fence still encircled it. Blackberry bushes, broom-sedge, a tangle of weeds, were a travesty of its crops. A fox, a swift-scudding tawny streak, sped across it as she looked. Hard by there was a deserted hut: the doors were open, showing the dark voids within; the batten shutters flapped with every changing whim of the winds. Fine sport they had had, these riotous mountain sprites, screaming down the chimney to affright the loneliness; then falling to sobs and sighs to mock the voices of those who had known sorrow here and perhaps shed tears; sometimes wrapping themselves in snow as in a garment, and reeling in fantastic whirls through the forlorn and empty place; sometimes twitting the gaunt timbers with their infirmities, and one wild night wrenching off half a dozen clapboards from the roof and scattering them about the door. Thus the moon might look in, seeing no more those whose eyes had once met its beam, and even the sunlight had melancholy intimations when it shone on the forsaken hearth-stone. A screech-owl had found refuge among

the rafters, and Alethea heard its quivering scream ending in a low, sinister chuckle. There was a barn near at hand, — a structure of undaubed, unhewn logs, with a wide open pass-way below the loft to shelter wagons and farm implements; it seemed in better repair than the house. The amber sky above the dark woods had deepened to orange, to crimson; the waning light suffused the waters of the spring branch which flowed close by the barn, the willows leaning to it, the ferns laying in it. The place was incredibly solitary and mournful with the persistent spectacle of the deserted home, suggestive of collapsed energies, of the defeated scheme of some simple humanity.

A faint bleat rose suddenly. Alethea turned quickly. Amongst a patch of briars she caught a glimpse of something white; another glance, — it was the ewe, quietly nibbling the grass.

Alethea had no intention of moving softly, but her skirts brushing through the weeds made hardly a sound. Her light, sure step scarcely stirred a leaf. The ewe saw her presently, and paused in feeding. She had been making the best of her woes, remaining near her lamb, which had fallen into a sink-hole, sustained by the debris of loose earth and banks of leaves held in the mouth of the cavity. Its leg was broken, and thus, though the sheep could venture to it, the lamb could not follow to the vantage-ground above. Seeing that succor was at hand, the sheep lost all patience and calmness, and ran about Alethea in a distracting fashion, bleating, till the lamb, roused to a renewed sense of its calamities, bleated piteously too. As it lay down in the cavity upon the dead leaves, it had a strangely important look upon its face, appreciating how much stir it was making in the world for one of its size. Alethea noticed this, albeit she too was self-absorbed at the moment. These treacherous hopper-shaped cavities are of indefi-

nite depth. To reach the lamb she must needs venture half across the sink-hole. She stepped cautiously down upon the débris, holding fast the while to the branches of an elder-bush growing on its verge. She felt the earth sinking beneath her feet. The sheep, which had jumped in too, sprang hastily out. Alethea had a dizzying realization of insecurity. She caught the lamb up in one arm, then stepped upon the sinking mass and struggled up the side of the aperture, as with a great gulp the leaves and earth were swallowed into the cavity. She looked down with that sickening sense of a sheer escape, still holding the lamb in one arm; the other hand readjusted the heavy masses of her golden hair, and the saffron kerchief about the neck of her sober-hued dress. The sheep, one anxiety removed, was the prey of another, and pressed close to Alethea, with outstretched head and all the fears of kidnapping in her pleading eyes.

Alethea waited for a moment to rest. Then as she glanced over her shoulder her heart seemed to stand still, her brain reeled, and but for her acute consciousness she would have thought she must be dreaming.

The clearing lay there all as it was a moment before: the deserted buildings, the weed-grown fields, the rotting rail fence; the woods dark about it, the sky red above it. Around and around the old barn, in a silent circuit, three men were solemnly tramping in single file. She stood staring at them with dilated eyes, all the mystic traditions of supernatural manifestations uppermost in her mind. Once more the owl's scream rent the brooding silence. How far that low, derisive chuckle echoed! A star, melancholy, solitary, was in the pensive sky. The men's faces were grave, — once, twice, thrice, they made the round. Then they stood together in the open space beneath the loft, and consulted in whispers.

One suddenly spoke aloud.

"Oh, Tobe!" he called.

"Tobe!" called the echoes.

There was no answer. All three looked up wistfully. Then they again consulted together in a low tone.

"Oh, Tobias!" cried the spokesman in a voice of entreaty.

"Tobias!" pleaded the plaintive echoes.

Still there was no answer. The owl screamed suddenly in its weird, shrill tones. It had flown out from among the rafters and perched on the smokeless chimney of the hut. Then its uncanny laughter filled the interval.

Once more the men consulted anxiously together. One of them, a tall, ungainly, red-haired fellow, seemed to have evolved a solution of the problem which had baffled them.

"Mister Winkey!" he exclaimed, with vociferous confidence.

The echoes were forestalled. A sneeze rang out abruptly from the loft of the deserted old barn, — a sneeze resonant, artificial, grotesque enough to set the blades below to roaring with delighted laughter.

"He mus' hev his joke. *Mister Winkey* air a mighty jokified old man," declared the red-haired fellow.

They made no effort to hold any further communication with the sneezer in the loft above. They hastily placed a burly jug in the centre of the space, and laid a silver half-dollar upon the cob that served as stopper. The coin looked extremely small in its juxtaposition. There may be people elsewhere who would be glad of a silver coin of that size capable of filling so disproportionately large a jug. Then they ran off fleetly out of the clearing and into the woods, and Alethea could hear the brush crackling as they dashed through it on the slopes far below.

She was still pale and tremulous, but no longer doubts beset her. She understood the wiles of the illicit distiller, pursued so closely by the artifices of the

raiders that he was prone to distrust the very consumers of his brush whiskey. They never saw his face, they knew not even his name. They had no faint suspicion where his still was hid. They were not even dangerous as unwilling witnesses, should they be caught with the illicit liquor in their hands. The story that they left a jug and a half-dollar in a deserted barn, and found the jug filled and the coin vanished, would inculcate no one. From the loft the distiller or his emissary could see and recognize them as they came. Alethea, having crept down the slope amongst the briars in search of the lamb, had been concealed from him. She was seized instantly by the desire to get away before he should appear. She coveted the knowledge of no such dangerous secret. She walked boldly out from the leafy covert, that he might see her in the clearing and delay till she was gone.

The lamb was bleating faintly in her arms; the sheep pressed close to her side, nudging her elbow with an insistent nozzle. The last flush of the day was on her shining hair and her grave, earnest face. The path led her near the barn. She hesitated, stopped, and drew back hastily. A man was swinging himself alertly down from the loft. He caught up the coin, slipped it into his pocket, and lifted the jug with the other hand. The next moment he dropped it suddenly, with a startled exclamation. His eyes had met her eyes. There was a moment of suspense charged with mutual recognition. Then she ran hastily by, never pausing till she was far away in the deep obscurity of the woods.

IV.

The night came on. The dark summits of the great mountains were heavily defined against the ethereal pallors of the sky. Here and there along those steep slanting lines that mark the ra-

vines a mist hung, vaguely perceived. A point of red light might gleam in the dusky depths of Piomingo Cove where the flare of a hearth-stone flickered out. All the drowsy nocturnal voices joined in an iterative monody, broken only when the marauding wolf of the Great Smoky howled upon the bald. The herders ruefully thought of the roaming yearlings, and presaged calamity. All the world was sunk in gloom, till gradually a rayonnant heralding halo, of a pallid and lustrous green, appeared above the deeply purple summits; in its midst the yellow moon slowly revealed itself, and with a visible tremulousness rose solemnly into the ascendancy of the night.

It was high in the sky when Mink Lorey rode along the wild forest ways. More than once he looked up earnestly at it, not under the spell of lunar splendors, but with a prosaic calculation of the hour. Suddenly he drew up the mare. He lifted his head, listening. Voices sounded in the depths of the woods,—faint, far, hilarious voices; then absolute silence. He struck the mare with his heels. The animal pushed on unwillingly, breaking through the brush, stumbling over the stones, scrambling up and down steep slopes. All at once, with a burst of laughter, there was disclosed an opening in the woods. A glory of pale moonlight suffused the mountains in the distance and the shimmering mists in the valley. In the flecking shadow of the great trees, with hairy moonlit faces and shining eyes, were half a dozen figures seated on logs or stones, or lying upon the ground.

Not fauns nor satyrs; not Bacchus come again with all his giddy rout. Only the malcontents because of the bonded still.

"Hy 're, Mink!" exclaimed Jerry Price. "We fund the jug hyar 'cord-in' ter promise, hid in a hollow tree."

"I hope," said Mink with sudden apprehension, as he dismounted, "thar be some lef' fur me."

"A leetle, I reckon. Hyar, Mink, wet yer whistle."

Mink sat down on the roots of a tree draped from its summit to its lowest bough with the rank luxuriance of a wild grapevine. The pendent ends swayed in the wind. The dew was upon the bunches of green fruit and the delicate tendrils, and the moonlight slanted on them with a glistening sheen.

Mink took the jug, which gurgled alluringly. He removed the cob that served as stopper, and smelled it with the circumspect air of those who drink from jugs. Then he turned it up to his mouth. A long bubbling sound, and he set it down with a sigh of satisfaction.

"Ye don't 'pear ez riled ez ye did when ye rid out'n Piomingo Cove," suggested Pete Rood.

He had a swaggering, triumphant manner, although he was lying on the ground.

Mink, leaning back against the bole of the tree, the moonlight full on his wild dark eyes, his clear-cut face, and tousled hair, gave no sign of anger or even of attention.

"Whar ye been all this time?" asked Jerry Price.

"Waal," said Mink leisurely, "ye know that thar coon ez Tad gin me, — I won it at 'five corn : ' arter I hed rid out'n Piomingo Cove an' hed started up the mounting, I hearn suthin' yappin' arter me, an' thar war Tad a-fetchin' his coon. That thar idjit hed run mighty nigh three miles ter fetch me his coon! Waal, I hed n't no 'casion fur a cap, an' the coon war a powerful peart leetle consarn, — smiled mighty nigh ekal ter a possum, — an' I 'lowed Elviry Crosby mought set store by sech fur a pet, an' so I rid over thar an' gin the coon ter her. She war mos' pleased ter death ter git the critter."

"Ye ain't been thar ever sence!" exclaimed Jerry.

"Yes," said Mink demurely. "I bided ter supper along of 'em, — the old

folks bein' powerful perlite an' gin me an invite."

Jerry poked him in the ribs. "Ye air a comical cuss! Ye hev got all the gals in the mountings crazy 'bout'n ye."

Mink laughed lightly, and stayed the fleet jug, which was agile considering its bulk, and once more drank deeply. If he had needed zest for his draught, he might have found it in the expression of Pete Rood's face. He had already revenged himself, but he must needs push the matter further. He laughed with reminiscent relish, as he leaned against the tree.

"Elviry axed mighty p'inted ef I war a-goin' right straight up ter the herder's cabin ter-night, an' I tole her ez I hed a job on hand with a man named Tobias Winkeye ez I hed ter look arter fust. But she suspicioned suthin', count o' the name, I reckon, though she never dreamt 't war jes' whiskey. She 'lowed she hed never hearn o' nobody named sech. An' I tole her she hed: her dad used ter like old Winkeye mightily, though *she* did n't know him ez well ez some. She 'lowed I war a-goin' off a-courtin' some other gal. It war toler'ble hard ter pacify her," with a covert glance at Rood. "I hed ter talk sixteen ter the dozen."

"Waal, we hed better look out how our tongues wag so slack with that thar name," said Price. "I lef' old man Griff settin' outside the mill door a-waitin' fur old Winkeye ter ride by, bein' ez I hed gin the word he lives in Eskaquia Cove, kase he wanted ter warn him not ter let no job o' work go ter Mink Lorey. He 'lowed he war goin' ter gin Mink a bad name."

Mink's blood, fired by the liquor, burned at fever heat. His roving eyes were distended and unnaturally bright as the moonlight flashed into them. His swarthy cheek was deeply flushed. Despite the rare chill air of the heights, he was heated; often he took off his hat to let the wind play in his long tangled

hair that hung down to his shoulders, and lay in heavy moist rings on his forehead. Every fibre was strained to the keenest tension of excitement. He was equally susceptible to any current of emotion, to anger or mirth. He broke out indignantly:—

"Old man Griff hed better quit tryin' ter spite me. I'll fix him fur it. I'm goin' by thar this very night an' lift the mill gate an' set the wheel a-runnin'. It'll be good ez a coon-fight ter see him kem out'n his house an' cuss!"

He burst into sudden laughter.

"Oh, ah! Oh, ah!" he sang,—

"The wind blows brief, the moon hangs high;
Oh, listen, folks!—the dead leaves fly.
The witch air out with a broom o' saidge,
Ter sweep 'em up an' over the aidge
O' the new-made grave, 'ter hide,' she said,
'The prints o' my fingers buryin' the dead;
Fur how he died—oh, ah! oh, ah!
I'd tell ef 't warn't fur the mornin' star.'"

His mellow, rich baritone voice, hilarious and loud, echoed far and wide, and incongruously filled the solemn solitudes.

"Who air a-goin' ter hear?" he demanded, when caution was suggested. "The herders on the mounting? Too fur off! Too high up! Asleep, besides."

"They'd think 't war a wolf," said Peter Rood, still lying at length on the ground.

Mink had his sensibilities. On these harmonious numbers he piqued himself. He felt affronted.

"A leetle mo', an' I'll break this jug over yer head. Nobody ain't a-goin' ter think ez my singin' air a wolf."

"Ye hand it hyar," said Pete; "nobody gits a fair show at that jug but you-uns." As he rose to his knees one foot caught in a grapevine, in his haste.

"Wait till it be empty," said Mink, making a feint of lifting it to his mouth. Then turning suddenly, he faced Pete Rood as he staggered to his feet, and dealt a blow which sent that worthy once more prone upon the ground.

There was a jumble of excited protest from the others. One was vociferously trying to quiet his companions. Mink had risen, and was squaring off with clenched fists.

"Kem on," he observed; "thar's ground enough hyar fur ez many ez kin kiver it."

"Look-a-hyar," exclaimed Jerry Price, whose grief that the placidities of the festivity should be frustrated very nearly resembled a regard for law and order, "ye two boys hev jes' got ter quit fightin' an' sech, an' spilin' the enjoyment o' the rest o' we-uns. Quit foolin', Mink. Ye ain't hurt no-ways, air ye, Pete?"

"Laws-a-massy, naw," said Pete unexpectedly. "Mink never knocked me down nohow. I jes' cotched my foot in a grapevine. That's all."

But he lifted himself heavily, and he limped as he walked to a rock at a little distance and sat down.

Mink with his sudden change of temper had let the encounter pass as a bit of fun. He referred to the jug frequently afterward, and again burst into song:—

"Oh, ah! Oh, ah!
The weevil's in the wheat, the worm's in the corn,
The moon's got a twist in the eend o' her horn;
Fur the witch, she grinned and batted her eye,
An' gin 'em an ail ez she went by
Ter fresk in the frost, 'an' show,' she said,
'I kin dance on my ankle-j'int's an' swaller my head,
An' how I do it, oh, ah! oh, ah!
I'd tell ef 't warn't fur the mornin' star.'"

The others joined tumultuously in the chorus. One sprang up, dancing a clumsy measure and striking his feet together with an uncouth deftness worthy of all praise in the estimation of his comrades. They broke into ecstatic guffaws, in the midst of which Mink's "Oh, ah! Oh, ah!" heralding the next verse, seemed a voice a long way off.

The shadows had shifted, slanted. The moon was westering fast. Every gauzy effect of vapor had its fascination in the embellishing beam, and shone

vaguely iridescent. All were drifting down to where the Scolacutta River breaks through Chilhowee. Above them rose that enchanted mountain's summit, with its long irregular horizontal line, purple and romantic, suggestive of its crags, its caves, its forests, and its wild unwritten poetry. A star was close upon it. Peace brooded on its heights. Down the ravine one could see a collection of great white trees standing in some field, all so tiny in the distance that it was as if the fingers of a ghostly hand had pointed upward at the group of uncouth revelers on the ridge.

The prophecy of dawn was momentarily reiterated with fuller phrase, with plainer significance. Even Mink, reluctant to recognize it, yielded at last to Jerry Price's insistence. And indeed the jug was empty.

"Put the jug in the hollow tree, then, like we promised, an' let 's go," said Mink. "Mos' day, ennybow. 'Oh, ah! Oh, ah! The daylight's apt ter break, said the witch.'"

The jug was thrust in the hollow of the tree, and the drunken fellows, in the securities of their fancied quiet, went whooping through the woods. The owl's hoot ceased as their meaningless clamor rose from under the boughs. Now and then that crisp, matutinal sound, the vibrant chirp of half-awakened nestlings, jarred the air.

The group presently began to separate, some going down to Eskaquia Cove, where they would find their several homes if they could, but would at all hazards lay down their neighbors' fences. Rood lingered for a time with Mink and one or two others who cherished the design of seeing old man Griff's mill started before day. He turned off, however, when they had reached the open spaces of Piomingo Cove. It lay quiet, pastoral, encircled by the solemn mountains, with the long slant of the moonbeams upon it and the

glisten of the dew. The fields had all a pearly effect, marked off by the zig-zag lines of the rail fences and the dark bushes that stood in corners. The houses, indicated by clumps of trees among which they nestled, were dark and silent. Not even a dog barked. When a cock crew the sudden note seemed clear and resonant as a bugle. "Crowin' fur fower o'clock," said Mink.

The road ran among woods much of the distance; through the trees could be caught occasional glimpses of the illuminated world without. But presently they gave way. A wide, deep notch in the summit of Chilhowee revealed the western sky, and within the limits of this gap the moon was going down. A translucent amber sphere it swung between the purple steepes, all suffused with its glamorous irradiation. Below, the shining breadth of the Scolacutta River swept down from the vague darkness that lay beneath. It was still night, yet one could see how the pawpaw and the laurel crowded the banks. The oblique line of the roof of the mill was drawn against the purple sky; its windows were black; its supports were reflected in the stream with a distinct reduplication; the water trickled down from crevices in the race with a lace-like effect, seeming never to fall, but to hang as if it were some gauzy fragment of a fabric. Beneath the great wheel, motionless, circular, shadowy, was a shoaling yellow light, pellucid and splendid,—the moon among the shallows. The natural dam, a glassy cataract, bursting into foam and spray, was whitely visible in the dim light, with surging rapids below. The sound seemed louder than usual; it deadened the snap when Mink cut a pole from a pawpaw tree and hastily trimmed the leaves. He climbed gingerly upon the timbers of the race, then paused, looked back, and hesitated.

The others had reined in their horses, and stood, ill-defined equestrian shadows, on the bank watching him.

He placed the pole beneath the lever by which the gate was raised, its other end being within the building. There was no sound but the monotone of the river. Then with a great creak the gate was lifted. The imprisoned water came through with a tumultuous rush. Mink felt the stir beneath as the wheel began to revolve. There was a sudden jar, a jerk, the structure swayed beneath him, a crash among the timbers, a harsh, wrenching sound as they tore apart. He saw the faint stars reel as in some distraught vision. He heard the wild exclamations of the men on the bank. He could not distinguish what they said, but with an instinct more than any appreciation of cause and effect he tried to draw away the pole to let the gate down.

Too late. Through the sunken wreck of the race still poured the water over the madly plunging wheel. Mink sprang upon the bank, fell upon his hands and knees, and as he struggled to his feet he saw beneath the race the grotesque distortions of the simple machinery. Some villain's hand had adroitly contrived a series of clogs, each of insufficient weight to stop the wheel with the water still pouring over it, but as it crushed them — first a barrel, then a pole, then a fence-rail — giving it a succession of shocks that were fast breaking it in pieces. Thus what was designed for jest should result in destruction. The mill itself was a rotten old structure at best. Jarring with every convulsive wrench and jerk of the bewitched wheel, its supports tottered feebly in the water, and when all at once the race came down, and the wheel and the heavy beams were driven against it, for an instant it quivered, then careened, crashed. There was a great cloud of dust rising from the tumbled wreck on the bank. In the water, floating away on the swollen floods, were heavy timbers, and barrels, and boards, and parts of the clapboard roof.

And then, from their midst, as if the old building had an appreciated agony in its dissolution, a great cry of pain went up. Mink turned, as he put his foot in the stirrup, to stare over his shoulder with a white face. Surely he was drunk, very drunk. Had the others heard? A twinkling light sprang up in the midst of the orchard boughs. The house had taken the alarm. His companions were getting away in haste. Sober enough for flight and flapping their elbows, they crowed in mockery. Mink leaped into his saddle to ride as ride he must, still looking with a lingering fear over his shoulder, remembering that quavering cry.

Was he drunk, or did he hear? Could any creature have been in the mill, undisturbed, — for they were so craftily quiet, — asleep till awakened by those death throes of the little building? Could it have been a dog, a pet fawn bleating with almost a human intonation in that common anguish of all life, the fear of death, — a pet cub? What! his heart ached for it, — he, the hardy hunter? Oh, was his conscience endowed with some subtle discernment more acute than his senses? It seemed a surly fate that crept up on the unwitting creature in the dark, in the humble peace of its slumbers. And he was sorry, too, for the old man's mill; and then a vague terror possessed him when he thought of the trickery with the wheel. Surely the hand of another had compassed its destruction, yet when or why he could not understand, could not guess; or was he himself the miscreant? He could not remember what he had done; he had been so very drunk.

Ah, should he ever again see Chilhowee thus receive the slant of the sunrise, and stand revealed in definite purple heights against the pale blue of the far west? Should he ever again mark that joyous matutinal impulse of nature as the dawn expanded into day? The note of a bird, sweet, reedy, thrilling

with gladness, came from the woods, so charged with the spirit of the morning that it might have been the voice of the light. And the dew was rich with the fragrance of flowers, and as he galloped along the bridle-path they stretched their rank growth across his way, sometimes smiting him lightly in the face, like a challenge to mirth. When he climbed the steep ridge from which were visible the domes of the Great Smoky, all massive and splendid against the dispersing rose in the sky, the sunlight gushing down in a crimson flood while the dazzling focus rose higher than the highest bald, he cared less to look above than into the shadowed depths of Piomingo Cove. Did he fancy, or could he see a stir there? An atom slowly moved down the lane, and across the red clay slope of a hill, — another, and yet one more. Was the settlement already roused with the news of the disaster to the mill? He turned and pressed his horse along the rocky road, up slopes and down again, still ascending and descending the minor ridges that lie about the base of the Smoky. Sometimes he wondered at himself with a harsh, impersonal reprehension, as if his deed were another's. "How 's the old man goin' ter make out ter barely live 'thout his mill?" he demanded of himself; "an' them gran'-chil'n ter keer fur, an' Tad, an' all."

Then would come again the recollection of that strange muffled scream, and though the sun was warm he shivered.

Often he drew up the mare and listened with a vague sense of pursuit. Stillness could hardly be more profound. Not the stir of a leaf, never a stealthy tread. Then as he started again down the rocky way, some vagrant echo, or a stone rolling under his mare's hoof, would bring to him again that sudden affright, and he would swiftly turn to see who dogged him.

There were many curves in the path, and unexpected turns, and once in its

sudden vista he saw before him a girl with yellow hair outlined against the green and gold foliage of the sunlit woods, clad in brown homespun, partly leading and partly driving a dun-colored ox, with a rope knotted about his long horns. She paused, swaying hard on it to check the beast, when she beheld the horseman, and her brown eyes were full of surprised recognition.

Mink gravely nodded in response to her grave salutation. He seemed at first about to pass without stopping, but when it was evident that she intended to let the ox trudge on he drew up the mare.

"Howdy, Lethe," he said.

"Howdy," returned Alethea.

"Enny news?"

She shook her head without speaking.

"Whar be ye a-goin' with Buck?" he asked.

"Arter the warpin' bars. They war loaned ter aunt Dely, an' she hain't got but one steer ter haul 'em home. So Buck hed ter go."

The ox had reached up his dun-colored head for the leaves, all green and flecked with golden light, behind her bright hair. She did not move out of the creature's way. She only stood and gazed at Mink.

"I war down ter Crosby's yestiddy evenin'," he observed, watching her.

"I hopes ye enjoyed yerse'f," she said, with tart self-betrayal.

He laughed a little, and turned the reins in his hands. He relished infinitely the sight of the red and angry spot on either cheek, the spark in her eye.

"I did," he said, jauntily, watching the effect of his words. "I seen Elviry."

She made an effort at self-control.

"Waal," she returned, calmly, although her voice trembled a little, "I hope ye kin agree with her better 'n ye ever done with me. We warn't made fur one another, I reckon, no-ways."

"Oh, I hain't never axed Elviry;

'tain't never gone ez fur ez that. I 'lowed ez mebbe ye an' me mought make it up some day."

He was only trying her, but the vaunted feminine intuition did not detect it. She crimsoned to the roots of her hair. Her eyes were full of liquid lights. She laughed, a low gurgling laugh of happiness, that, nevertheless, broke into a sob.

"I dunno 'bout that," she said, evasively, belying the rapture in her face.

She was very beautiful at the moment. A cultivated man, versed in the harmonies of line and color, tutored to discriminate expressions and gauge feelings and recognize types, might have perceived something innately noble in her, foolish though the affection was which embellished her.

Even he was impressed by it. "I hev never axed nobody but ye," he said. "Not even arter we quar'led."

He was not bound by this, which he knew full well, and it promised nothing. But it held her love and loyalty for him, if ever he should want them.

Nevertheless, while he piqued himself on his domination, he was under her influence at the fleeting moment when he was with her. Perhaps her presence induced some tender affinity for the better things. He said with a sigh, "I hev done gone an' got in a awful scrape, Lethe. I reckon nobody never hed sech a pack o' troubles in this worl'."

With a sort of pitying deprecation of the wiles of old Tobias Winkeye she gravely listened. Once she unconsciously put up her hand and stroked his mare. He was petulant, like a spoiled child, when he told how he only meant a jest and such woeful destruction had ensued. "An' me so boozy I dunno *what* I done. An' that thar pore ole man! An' his mill plumb ruined! An' all his gran'chillen an' Tad ter keer fur!"

Her face had become very pale. Her voice trembled as she said, —

"Ain't sech agin the law, Reuben?"

He noticed that she called him by his name, rather than the sobriquet his pranks had earned. He was unfamiliar with himself thus dignified, and it gave him an added sense of importance.

"Yes, but 't ain't nuthin' but ten dollar fine, mebbe, an' a few days in jail," — she gasped, — "ef they ketches me."

He looked at her with a swift, crafty brightness that was wonderfully like the little creature whose name he bore.

"I would n't keer fur that, though," he added after a pause. "Bein' in jail fur rollickin' roun' the kentry jes' fur fun ain't a disgrace, like fur stealin' an' sech. What pesters me so is studyin' 'bout the old man and his mill, plumb ruined. Lord! Lord! I'd gin my mare an' hogs an' gun ef it hed never happened!"

She stood meditative and motionless against the leafy background, all dark and restful verdure close at hand, opening into a vista of luminous emerald lightened in the distance to a gilded green where the sunshine struck aslant with a climax of gold.

"I reckon ye think so, Reuben, but ye would n't," she said at last, with her fatal candor.

He winced. He was both hurt and angry as he rejoined, "An' why would n't I?"

"Why, ye be 'bleeged ter know ef ye war ter gin the old man yer mare an' gun an' hogs, he'd be more 'n willin' ter gin it up agin ye. The mill stones air thar yit under the water, an' he could sell that truck o' yourn an' build ez good a shanty ez he hed afore, — better, kase 't would be new."

He looked down at her, tapping his heavy boot with the hickory switch in his hand.

"Ye ain't changed none, since we war promised ter marry," he said slowly. "Then ye war forever a-jawin' an' a-preachin' at me 'bout what I done an' what I oughter do, same ez the rider. Ye talk 'bout jewty ez brash ez ef ye

never hed none, same ez he does 'bout religion. He ain't hurt with *that*, ef ye watch him fresk 'round when they's pourin' him out a dram or settin' out the table. That 's sech grace ez he hev got, but he kin talk powerful sober ter other folks; jes' like you-uns. I'm sorry I ever tole ye about it, ennyways. I'm sorry I met up with ye this mornin' —

The girl's face was as visibly pained as if he had cruelly struck her. He went on tumultuously, aggregating wrath and a sense of injury and a desire of reprisal with every word.

"I'm sorry I ever seen ye! Ye 'mind me o' that thar harnt o' a Herder on Thunderhead the folks tells about. Ef ye happen ter kem upon him suddint, an' don't turn back but ketch his eye, that year air withered. Nuthin' ye plant will grow, an' ef the craps air laid by they won't ripen. He can't kill ye; he jes' spiles yer chance. An' ye 'minds me o' him."

"Oh, Reuben!" the girl cried, in deprecation.

"Ye do, — ye do! I tole ye, kase I 'lowed mebbe ye mought help me, — more fool me! — leastways ye mought be sorry. Shucks! And now I'm sorry I tole ye."

He turned the mare suddenly and slowly rode away. He glanced back once. If she had been looking wistfully after him he might have paused. He expected it; he had even listened for her to call. The light struck with a rich tinge on her golden hair and her delicate profile as she reached up to adjust the rope on the long horns of the dun-colored ox. The vacillating color of the leaves shoaling in the wind and the sunshine seemed the more fantastic for the sober hue of her brown gown and the crude red clay path. Even when the animal resumed his journey she did not once look back, and presently the fluctuating leaves hid her from sight.

Mink's gust of temper had served to divert him for the moment from the contemplation of his perplexities. Now they reasserted themselves. Before, however, he had seen no hope of extrication. But Alethea's words had given him something. He began to appreciate the necessity of a definite plan of action. If he should go up to Piomingo Bald he would be taken at the herders' cabin by the officers of the law. His home could be no refuge. He felt a respite essential. He craved the time to think of Alethea's suggestion, to canvass the ground, to judge what was possible. At last he dismounted and turned his mare out; even here he could hear the occasional jangling bells of the herds, and the animal would soon follow the familiar sound. He took his way on foot down the mountain and through Eskaquia Cove. "The news 'll travel slower 'n me," he said.

He hardly felt hunger; he did not realize his fatigue. The red clay roads were vacant, the few daily passers were not yet astir. He avoided the possibility of meeting them as far as he might by taking short cuts over the mountains and through valleys. His instinct was to remove himself as far as he might from his accustomed haunts. Nevertheless, he had no definite intention of hiding, for after traversing Hazel Valley he struck boldly into the county road that leads up the eastern slope of Big Injun Mountain. He had no thought of resisting arrest. He walked along slowly, meditatively, hardly conscious even of the vague company of his shadow climbing the mountain with him, until he suddenly found that it had skulked away and he was bereft of this vague similitude of a comrade. For the sun was already west of Big Injun. A pensive shade lay far down the slope, but below there was again the interfulgent play of sunshine itinerant with the wind among the leaves.

Once he sat down on a rock close by

the road, with his head in his hands and his elbows on his knees, and sought again to adjust his course to the best interests of conscience and policy. A woman with a bag of fruit on her back passed him presently. He gave her "howdy;" then after a time rose and trudged up and up the road. He had known repentance before, for he was plastic morally. But in his experience there had been no perplexity. It seemed to him, with the urgency of decision and the turmoil of doubt pressing upon him, that it was happier to be resolutely reckless. The harassments of uncertainty had affected his nerves, and he gave a quick start when the abrupt jangle of a bell smote the air. On the opposite side of the road, among the great craggy steep, there was a wide, low niche in the face of the cliff, with a beetling roof and a confusion of rocks and bushes below. Sheep had climbed into it: some were standing looking down at him, now and then stirring and setting the bell to jangling fitfully; others lay motionless in the shadowy nook. He was about to go on; suddenly he turned and began to scale the huge fragments of rock to the niche in the cliff.

"Ye clar out," he said to the sheep as they scuttled away at his approach; "ye hev got the very spot I want."

They huddled together as he crept in; two or three hastily ran out upon the rocks, — only a little frightened, for they began presently to nibble the grass growing in the rifts. He lay down, pillowing his head upon his arm, and turning his eyes on the scene without. He could see far below into the depths of Hazel Valley, with hill and dale in undulatory succession. The light glanced here and there on the minute lines of a zigzag fence; on a field in which the stark and girdled trees stood in every gaunt attitude of despair; on a patch striped with green where tobacco grew in orderly ranks, — all amongst the dense forests, upon which these tiny sugges-

tions of civilization seemed only some ephemeral accident, some ineffective incident, capable of slightest significance. Beyond, the wooded mountains rose in the densities of unbroken primeval wilderness, with irregular summit-lines, with graduating tones from bronze-green to blue-gray, with a solemnity that even the sunshine did not abate. Still further, the Great Smoky, veiled with mist and vague with distance, stood high against the sky, — so high that but for the familiar changeless outline it must have seemed the fiction of the clouds.

The sheep came back and crowded about him, — he lay so still. Once he was conscious of their motion; he intended to rouse himself in a moment and drive them off. And once afterward he was vaguely aware of the tinkle of the bell. Then he heard no more.

The afternoon wore on. The sunlight deepened to orange and burned to red. The mountains were all garbed in purple. The sky above that splendid summit-line of the Great Smoky caught the reflection from the west and was delicately roseate. Cow-bells were clanking in Hazel Valley, faintly, faintly. A star, most serene, was at the zenith.

The sheep in the dark niche of the crags stirred, and huddled together again, and were quiet. The moon came and looked coyly in, as if she sought Endymion. The face of the mountaineer, its reckless spirit all spent, was gentle and young in the soft, shy light.

All at once he was awake. The sheep were crowding timorously about him. A voice broke with sudden discord into the harmonies of the night.

"Nuthin' but sheep, I reckon."

There was a great scuffling among the rocks and bushes, and Mink ventured to lift his head.

He saw the mist-filled valley below, the glisten of the moon in the skies above; the infinite expanse of vague mountain forms all along the back-

ground, and in the stony road on the verge of the precipice an equestrian group standing motionless in shadow and sheen.

He recognized the sheriff of the county among them, and the constable from Piomingo Cove was in the act of clamoring up the rocks.

Charles Egbert Craddock.

SALEM CUPBOARDS.

THERE were cupboards in Salem. Whether they are there still, or have been built up, or pulled down, or swept away, in the march of modern improvement, I know not, but in my childhood there were cupboards in Salem.

They were, moreover, real cupboards; no after-thoughts, built across the end of an entry here, or the corner of a room there, — places into which to huddle umbrellas and overcoats, or to hustle mending and children's litter out of the sight of visitors. Salem cupboards were always intentional. The builder understood his responsibility, and acted accordingly. The housewife regarded her cupboards as the inner and most sacred portion of her trust. It was no light task even to keep the keys always counted and polished. As for losing one, or forgetting which was which, that would indicate a mind so utterly frivolous that one could hardly conceive of it.

The genuine, old-time Salem housekeeper realized that there was a conscience in her work. She took her cupboards seriously. To her there was nothing trivial about them. To do her duty by her cupboards was one of the most inviolable principles of her sober and decorous life.

It took no ordinary brain to keep watch and ward over these cupboards. They were many in number. They were confusing as to size and shape. They possessed the charm of the unexpected. One never knew quite when or where one should chance upon them.

They were tall and narrow beside the fireplace, or low and chubby above it; they lurked behind the wainscoting, like Polonius back of the arras. One of them was to be reached only by a step-ladder; another jolly pair occupied craninies under two deep window-seats. In one house was a cupboard which pretended to be solid wall, but was really a deep recess for the concealment of firearms; and in yet another was a narrow closet about which hung the horror of an old Ginevra-like legend of smothering to death.

There was literally no end to the number and variety of Salem cupboards. They possessed a charm quite their own, and this charm was felt to the utmost by the children, who were only occasionally allowed to view the treasures kept under strict lock and key by the high priestesses of these sacred nooks and shrines.

Foremost in the memory of delightful Salem cupboards stands the dining-room closet of a second-cousin of ours, whom I will call cousin Susan, because that is as far as possible from being her real name. She was a widow of some fifty odd years, and kept house for a bachelor brother, who was a retired sea-captain. She was a round, trim, black-eyed woman, greatly afflicted with rheumatism, for which reason she always walked with a cane. The cane was of some dark, foreign wood, highly polished, and the top was carved to resemble a falcon's head, with shining eyes of yellow glass.

Cousin Susan was a kindly soul, who would, I think, have even been merry, had not the austerity of her youthful training warped her natural instincts and given her a certain rigidly virtuous air. She believed very sincerely in the old-time maxim that "children should be seen, and not heard," and she had rather an alarming way at times of saying "Tut, tut!" But she was really fond of young people, and whenever we went to see her she would say seductively, —

"I wonder, now, if we could find anything nice in cousin Susan's dining-room cupboard."

And truly that person who failed to do so must have been hard to please; for, in our eyes at least, that cupboard held a little of everything that was rare and delightful.

A most delicious odor came forth when the door was opened: a hint of the spiciness of rich cake, a tingling sense of preserved ginger, and a certain ineffable sweetness which no other closet ever possessed, and which I know not how to describe. It might well have proceeded from the walls and shelves of the cupboard itself, for they were indeed emblems of purity. The paint was varnished to a high degree of glossiness, and was so exquisitely kept as to look like white porcelain.

The china here, as in all genuine Salem cupboards, was chiefly of the honest old blue Canton ware. There were shining piles of those plates which, while they are rather heavy to handle, always surprise one by being so thin at the edges. There were generous teacups like small bowls, squat pitchers with big noses, and a tureen whose cover had the head of a boar for a handle. And in all this the blue was dull and deep in tint, with a certain ill-defined, vaporous quality at the edges of the lines, and the white of the cool greenish tinge of a duck's egg. You can buy blue Canton to-day, but it is not old blue Canton.

Such china is matchless now, but in this cupboard there were shelves of it.

Cousin Susan possessed also another set of china, which she valued far above her blue. It was always singularly attractive to us as children, though I have come to believe that it is far less beautiful than the Canton. It was a pure, thin white ware, delicately fluted at the edges and decorated with little raised lilac sprigs. It was used only upon occasions of solemn company tea-drinkings, and cousin Susan always washed it herself in her little cedar dish-tub. We children considered this china so choice and desirable that a bit of a broken saucer, which included one of the pale, tiny sprays, was cherished far above our real doll's dishes. We lent it from one to another, each of us keeping it for one day; but it was always one of those unsatisfactory treasures of childhood for which we could never find any adequate use. We could think of nothing to do with this bit of china which seemed at all worthy of so lovely an object.

At the left hand of cousin Susan's shelves of china was a little cupboard with a diamond-paned glass door. This was the *sanctum sanctorum*, — a cupboard within a cupboard; and here, as one might have expected, were stored the choicest treasures of all. It was not the domestic preserve closet. Cousin Susan was thrifty, and had good store of home-made dainties, but they were kept in the cool seclusion of a dark cellar store-room. This little glass cupboard held the stock of foreign sweetmeats: the round-shouldered blue jars, inclosed in a network of split bamboo, which contained the fiery, amber ginger; the flat boxes of guava jelly, hot curry powders, chilli sauce, and choleric Bengal chutney. Here were two miniature casks of tamarinds, jolly and black, cousin Susan's favorites. She had a certain air of disapproval toward most of these strange conserves. "They were not good for little people," she averred;

and indeed she always maintained that these ardent sweetmeats were fitter for the delectation of rude men than for the delicate palates of gentlewomen. Of tamarinds, however, cousin Susan did approve. Properly diluted with cool water, they made what she called a "very pretty drink." She was fond of sending a glass to any neighbor who was ill and feverish, and she was always following our cousin the sea-captain about with a blue china bowl of the mixture, begging him to partake of it.

"Susan, I hate tamarind-water," our cousin would protest.

"It will cool your blood, William," his sister would urge.

"But I don't want my blood cool. I want it warm," the captain would reply.

As a general thing, however, cousin Susan came off triumphant. The captain grumblingly partook of his dose, and was always most generous in sharing it with us children. The beautiful little brown stones also fell to our lot, and we hoarded the useless things with great care, although it always seemed to us a great oversight on the part of nature that tamarind seeds did not have holes through them, that one might string them as beads.

Cousin Susan's cupboard also contained stronger waters than tamarind, for side by side sat two corpulent cut-glass decanters, of which one was half filled with madeira wine, and the other with honest rum. A variety of sweet cakes was near by, to be served with the wine to any chance visitor. There were black fruit cake in a japanned box; "hearts and rounds" of rich yellow pound cake; and certain delicate but inane little sponge biscuit, of which our cousin spoke by the older-fashioned name of diet — or, as she chose to pronounce it, "dier" — bread. She always called the sponge cakes "little dier breads." Pound and fruit cakes were forbidden to our youth, but we might have our ladylike fill of "dier breads," and also

of delightful seed-cakes, which were cut in the shape of an oak-leaf, and were marvels of sugary thinness.

These seed-cakes, by the bye, were kept in a jar which deserves at least a passing mention. It was, I suppose, some two or three feet high, though it looked to me then much higher. It was of blue-and-white china, and was fitted with a cover of dull silver. Tradition stated that some seafaring ancestor had brought it home from Calcutta, filled with rock-candy. What was done with so large a supply of this confection I never knew. In those days choice sugar-plums were not as plenty as they have since become; possibly at the time "black-jacks" and "gibraltars" were unknown, and this was Salem's only candy. At all events, it is somewhere recorded that the ship *Belisarius* brought from Calcutta "ten thousand seven hundred and sixty-seven pounds" of this same rocky and crystalline dainty. The fact of such a quantity of candy had for us children a superb and opulent significance. What an idea, to have a choice confection, not by the stick or beggarly ounce, but by the jarful! To think of going and casually helping one's self at will! To imagine lifting that silver lid, and gazing unreprieved into the sugary depths! Perhaps nice, white-haired spinsters used it in glittering lumps to sweeten their tea, or even served it at table by the plateful, as one might serve cake. Fancy exhausted itself in all sorts of delightful speculations. The whole legend had a profuse and mythical sound. It was like a fairy tale, a scene from *Arabian Nights*. It threw about the jar and the cupboard a mystic charm which time fails to efface. Even now a stick of sparkling rock-candy has power to call up cousin Susan's dining-room cupboard, its sweet, curious perfume, the quaint old silver and blue china, and the huge turkey-feather fan, with its wreath of brilliant painted flowers, which hung on the inside of the door.

Out of the shadows of the past comes another memory, the picture of that strange old Salem homestead which has been made known to fame as the House of the Seven Gables. Some alterations have done away with two of the gables, but the old house is otherwise unchanged. In the days of my childhood its mistress was a lonely woman, about whom hung the mystery of one whose solitude is peopled by the weird visions that opium brings. We regarded her with something of awe, and I have wondered, in later days, what strange and eldritch beings walked with her about those shadowy rooms, or flitted noiselessly up and down the fine old staircase.

The House of the Seven Gables was no open and joyous dwelling, where children loved to flock and run about at will. There was always an air of ceremony and dignity there, and a certain oppressive chill haunted the great low parlor, where the beams divided the ceiling into squares. We never paid a visit there except with some grown person, and then sat throughout our stay, dangling our legs from our high chairs, and studying the quaintly stiff array of ornaments upon the lofty mantel. There were three covered Delft jars, two vases of flowers, and at either end a flask-shaped china vase. Between these taller articles were set shallow cups of painted china. Except in the flowers which filled the two middle vases, I never knew the arrangement of the mantel to differ.

A large jar stood on the floor directly beneath the mantel, and ranged firmly about the room were several Dutch apple-tree chairs, with others of old-fashioned severity. On the right of the mantel was a delightful cupboard, whose tall, arched door often stood open, displaying a beautiful collection of old cut glass. We children used to describe this cupboard as "hollow," it being, in fact, shaped like an apse. It had six semi-circular shelves, all of rich dark

wood, against which the rows of splendid old glass glittered most bravely. There were graceful pitchers, shallow dishes, odd bowls, and flagons almost without number. On the floor of the cupboard a vast china punch-bowl was flanked by jars and vases each more enchanting than the other. I believe there was no truly housewifely dame in Salem who did not adore and envy this wealth of crystal, but although we children admired it, it did not inspire us with any deeper feelings. It did not appeal to the youthful imagination. It was an array of frail and icy splendor, toward which our hearts could not warm; not even the subtle suggestions of good cheer conveyed by delicate wine-glasses and portly old decanters could charm minds so unformed and simple as ours.

Equally far removed, and even more splendid, was the chest of family silver, which we were sometimes allowed to behold. How little did we think, as we viewed in admiring silence the fine heavy tankards, candlesticks, old two-tined silver forks, and antique porringers, that the fate of this haughty collection was to be sold for mere old silver, and hustled without respect or reverence to a fiery death in the silversmith's crucible! Sadly changed since that day is the House of the Seven Gables. The family silver is melted; the antique furnishings are scattered; and gone, one knows not whither, the beautiful old glass, the glory of that tall, dark, "hollow" cupboard, and the pride of that strange mistress, who dreamed such dreams and saw such eerie visions in her great lonely chamber above-stairs.

Another Salem cupboard, which is always of pleasant memory, was in the house of one of my schoolmates, with whom I was spasmodically intimate. I am sorry to say that our visits to this closet were attended by a certain awful joy, from the fact that they always partook of a character surreptitious, not to say sneaking. I was assured by my

companion that her mother approved of her investigations, but, at the same time, she casually mentioned that it was as well not to speak in the front entry, and that the fourth stair from the top creaked "so awful" that she usually made a point of stepping over it.

The chamber containing the closet was a back room, seldom visited, and used only for the storage of trunks and boxes. The windows were fitted with shutters, in one of which a heart-shaped hole had been cut to admit a little light. At the chimney end the room was wainscoted to the ceiling with wood which had never been painted, but which had taken a fine brown color from age and the fires which had once roared on the red-tiled hearth. The closet in this brown paneling was one of the tall and narrow sort, and the shelves ran back very deep. It was of the same age-darkened wood within as without, and the door sagged on its hinges, so that we had to lift it together when we opened it; otherwise we might have disturbed some of those people below who were so very willing we should be there. In this cupboard were stored the possessions of a great-aunt of my friend. We had seen an ivory picture of her in the parlor many times, and we thought of her always as a thin young creature, with unnaturally large gray eyes, and a neck that looked too slender to bear the weight of the small head with its wealth of piled-up auburn hair. Her name was Isabel, and she had died in her early girlhood. Nobody seemed to remember much about her. Perhaps there was nothing to remember. Her miniature and her framed sampler were preserved with honor, but I think my friend and myself were the only ones who cared for the relics which were put away in this upper cupboard.

There were a number of books of the floral-token order, containing sentimental verses and bits of elegant prose in praise of the Rose, the Lily, the Rain-

bow, and kindred subjects. They were embellished with the portraits of large-eyed and small-mouthed beauties with wonderful ringlets, and the covers, though now faded, had once been gorgeous with gilding and floral designs. An unpleasant feature of these books was the fact that when one opened them tiny brown spiders went "tacking" crookedly across the pages. They were a highly objectionable sort of spiders, that did not at all mind being suddenly jammed between the pages, — for they were already too flat to be any flatter, — and that would just as lief run backward as forward with their ugly curving legs.

On the same shelf with the books was the mahogany box of water-colors with which poor Isabel, who had accomplishments, forsooth, had made the prim little sketches which filled a portfolio. They were chiefly of the stencil-plate variety, done from boarding-school "patterns," in clear colors, upon white, gilt-edged drawing-paper. There was one full-blown white rose, painted with exquisite neatness and delicacy, which was an especial favorite of ours; but most of the designs were wreaths and garlands of flowers surrounding verses of poetry copied in a fine hand. There was also on this shelf an album, wherein friends had written verses from the poets, and admirers had even ventured upon original tributes "To Isabel."

In a bag of faded brocade was a tangle of pale sampler silks and crewels, not in that deliciously prim state of order which one would have expected of Isabel. Perhaps before our day some other child had tossed them over, even as we did, longing but not daring to appropriate them. Somehow, these silks and wools seemed so much prettier than those of any ordinary, down-stairs work-bag; and certainly nothing could in any way compare with the basket of pieces of French prints with which Isabel had been "setting a Job's Patience." No

modern cottons possess the faint delicacy of color and fabric of these old-time French calicoes. We used to delight in spreading the pieces out upon the floor, and choosing, in discreet whispers, what patterns we would like for gowns.

Piles of yellow old newspapers filled the closet's upper shelves, and a box of thin gauze ribbons and a few pairs of silk gloves, long and limp, completed the list of Isabel's relics. It would be hard to describe the singular charm which clung about these simple keepsakes, though probably, in great part, it was that the joy was a forbidden one. Be that as it may, there was a remarkable attraction exercised upon us by the silent chamber, the ray of sunlight which fell through the heart-shaped hole in the shutter, the narrow brown cupboard, and the precious possessions of poor gray-eyed Isabel, who to us could never be old.

When, as children, we had been especially good, we were sometimes rewarded by being sent upon a visit to a certain delightful maiden lady whom we called "Miss Mary-Ellen." It was really Miss Mary-Ellen whom we went to see, but we always hoped that her sister, Miss Eliza-Ann, would be at home, for Miss Eliza-Ann was very strange and did surprising things. She was the elder of the two sisters, and might in these days have been called strong-minded, though the word then was "eccentric." She was a tall, long-armed woman, with a Roman nose, piercing black eyes, and a wild-looking brown wig which was always awry. This wig, by the way, possessed an awful fascination for us children, partly because it was a wig, and partly because Miss Eliza-Ann had a startling habit of suddenly plucking it from her head with a vindictive clutch, and casting it upon the floor, when she was absorbed in study, annoyed by the heat, or excited by discussion. One never knew at what moment she might do this, and therefore

we always watched her with hopeful interest. She held great possibilities of amusement. She became in time, for us, a sort of majestic Punch and Judy. Her head was as smooth and ivory-tinted as the ostrich egg which adorned the mantel, and when she doffed her wig her whole appearance underwent the most extraordinary change. This habit was terribly annoying to Miss Mary-Ellen, herself the most dainty and decorous of maiden ladies. I can see yet the horrified way in which she would lift her hands, crying, —

"Oh, Eliza-Ann, Eliza-Ann, how can you do so?"

"Because, Mary-Ellen," Miss Eliza-Ann would respond, in her slightly bass voice, "I am uncomfortable. My brain is too warm to think."

"Then at least put on a handkerchief," her sister would plead. "It really does n't seem decent; before the children, too!"

To which Miss Eliza-Ann was apt to reply by her favorite exclamation, "Fiddlesticks!"

However, she would eventually hang loosely over her head a red bandana handkerchief, which certainly gave her a very witch-like and unpleasant look. She was a woman of superior and, for those days, unusual scholarly attainments. Her friends sighed and shook their heads a little over "poor Eliza-Ann." It would have been more truly feminine, they felt, had she not been quite so fine a linguist and mathematician. They could not thoroughly approve of her being able to fit youths for Harvard. Her masculine failings were, however, rather softened by the fact that Miss Eliza-Ann was a model of feminine modesty. In spite of the episodes of the wig, she was severely proper in her way, and a highly irreverent nephew has even been known to declare that his aunt always drew circles by a saucer, considering dividers indelicate on account of their limbs. She had what

was, in our eyes, a highly objectionable habit of unexpectedly pouncing upon us with mathematical conundrums. She delighted to spring upon us at unguarded moments and ask triumphantly, —

“How much are twelve and nine? and thirteen? and twenty-one? and seven?”

And this abominable practice she would sometimes pursue for an entire afternoon, waiting until we were happily forgetful and absorbed, and then suddenly attacking us once more with an explosive “And fifteen? and nine?” She called this pastime the “game of mental addition,” but it was a sorry game for us. We used to dodge around corners to avoid meeting her on the street, for fear of being confronted with one of these baleful questions; and I recollect encountering Miss Eliza-Ann at a party, when I was quite a grown girl, and having to struggle to persuade myself that she would no longer raise her thin forefinger and say, “And seven? and eighteen?”

As for Miss Mary-Ellen, she was in every way a contrast to her more brilliant sister. She was tall, but, being in delicate health, she was of fragile figure, and was never seen without a demure little shawl about her shoulders. She usually wore a gown of very dark satin, changing from green to black, and a long black silk apron. Her ordinary shawl was of fine white cashmere, with a border in black and slaty-blue, and a single large palm-leaf ornamented the corner which hung exactly in the middle of the back. She had other shawls of much gorgeousness, which appeared only upon festive occasions. Miss Mary-Ellen’s face was almost as pale as her lovely silver hair, which she wore in little curls each side of her temples. Her cap was white, with tiny bows of lavender ribbon, and her wide worked collar was fastened by a pin containing hair from the heads of her father and mother. I think that she had the very sweetest and

most lovable withered old face in the world. I dare say she was no beauty, but we firmly believed her one. She was so delicately and exquisitely fragrant and immaculate that it was like caressing a bunch of garden pinks to put your cheek against hers. Above all, her countenance so beamed with a gentle and innocent kindness, a sort of beneficent love and charity for all mankind, that we children could not choose but adore her. She was not a scholar, like her sister, but she possessed various pretty accomplishments. She directed the house, and, when her health permitted, she always made the “diet bread.” It used to be a belief in Salem that it took a lady’s hand to make really elegant sponge-cake. Heavier sorts of dainties might be trusted to servants, but only a gentlewoman could fitly be expected to take the responsibility of this most delicate of sweets. So true was this that if a once famous school in Salem did not actually include sponge-cake in its curriculum, at least it is true that no young lady’s education was considered finished until she had made a loaf of irreproachable “diet bread.” Miss Mary-Ellen’s was famous even in Salem. She could also fashion very pretty needle-books, and could paint bright-colored butterflies on Chinese rice-paper. Her delicate health confined her much to the house, and she dearly loved to have children visit her, if they were good. She could not bear boisterous conduct, and quarrels and bickerings caused her deep distress. It should be said, however, that we seldom displayed any but our best behavior to gentle Miss Mary-Ellen, and she, on her part, used to exert herself for our enjoyment. We were allowed to play with the curious ivory chessmen which her great-uncle Joseph had brought from Calcutta; she let us look over her piece-bags, and choose one bit of silk or satin for ourselves; and last, and best of all, she showed us her sitting-room cupboard.

The sitting-room was above-stairs, as Miss Mary-Ellen was often too feeble to go down for many weeks together. Here was Miss Eliza-Ann's severe study-table, with its globe and books; and here was her sister's little work-stand, whose deep green-baize drawer held her crewel work and fine sewing; and here, in a cupboard in the white wainscoting, were stored away many curious and delightful objects.

Miss Mary-Ellen disliked to have her belongings handled, and during the inspection we were seated opposite our hostess, and cautioned to keep our hands clasped. This air of mild ceremony only added to the delight of "seeing Miss Mary-Ellen's things." It was in this cupboard, to begin with, that she kept her shawls. There was one of creamy China *crêpe*, heavy with silken embroidery; another was of scarlet camel's hair, of such fabulous fineness that it might well have been one of those fairy-tale fabrics which were so easily tucked away in a nutshell. In our eyes, however, the most beautiful were a pair of lovely shoulder shawls from Canton, which dwelt in scented seclusion in a sandal-wood box. They were always called "the pina shawls," but their softness was unlike the wiry texture of any pina cloth. One was white, with the clear and dazzling whiteness of spun glass, the groundwork as sheer as a frost web, and the pattern of silvery lilies gleaming with a silky sheen. The companion shawl was of a charming shade of rose-pink, and this was also shot through with a design of silken flowers. These shawls, our friend told us, she wore with her black satin gown when she gave a "tea-company;" and she added cannily, while putting them to bed in their folds of soft Chinese paper, that she always wore them by turns, so that one should last just as long as the other.

On the second shelf of the cupboard was a small tea-chest, which was appar-

ently full of certain strange beads. Our hostess could not remember whether her great-uncle had said that they had been brought from Canton or Calcutta, but she knew that they came from somewhere in the magical East. Each bead was of the size of a large pea, and was grooved longitudinally. They were made of a fine clay, and were dull blue in color, with an odd glistening effect, as if silver dust might have been mixed with the clay. They were perfumed, and when they became warm in the hand or on the neck gave forth a musky sweetness, faint and enchanting. Miss Mary-Ellen gave us each a string of these beads, and I never happen upon them to this day without being touched by a sense of mystery. They suggest strange Hindoo rites, Nautch dances, and women with dusky throats; they never have lost the suggestive charm of that Orient from whence they came.

Among the most pleasing of Miss Mary-Ellen's relics were her fans, of which she possessed a variety. There was one of carved sandal-wood inlaid with pearl and silver, and one of ivory, as fragile as yellow lace; but our delight was an old French fan of light blue silk, whereon a little marquis in silver and pink offered a rose to a dainty marquise in puffs and patches, while, just beyond, three maids, with arms entwined, forever danced a minuet measure, and about all were pale garlands of faded roses and little naked Loves. We loved the pretty marquise and the dancing trio, and much preferred this fan even to the Chinese one of white feathers, oddly decorated with little leaves and blossoms in tinsel and gay-colored embossed paper.

And, speaking of feathers, I am reminded of one other drawback, beside the game of mental addition, to the complete enjoyment of our visits to this pleasant house. This drawback was Miss Mary-Ellen's parrot, than which a more thoroughly vicious and disreputa-

ble old bird was never seen. As far as I know, he had absolutely no claim to respect or even toleration, except the fact that his mistress loved him. He was ragged and battered in appearance, and his colors, like his morals, were low in tone. He had always about him an air of having been out all night, and, so far from repenting, of reveling in a sense of his own evil ways. He had a wicked eye, and an unpleasant habit of roosting upon the chair-rails and unexpectedly pecking at the legs of us children. His disposition was morose and vengeful. He loved nobody. He only endured his mistress for the sake of the loaf-sugar she gave him. Between him and Miss Eliza-Ann a deadly dislike existed. As a general thing, he sulked and glowered on the back of a small sofa in the corner. Here I suppose him to have spent his time in reviewing dark episodes in his past life, possibly with some degree of sullen satisfaction. Occasionally he varied this occupation by making a sortie to attack Miss Eliza-Ann's ankles, for which he entertained the greatest aversion. I never knew anything to afford the least amusement to Polly except Miss Eliza-Ann's clutching off her wig; and even in this case I think it was not so much mirth at a ludicrous action as it was diabolic glee at the dreadful guy the poor lady looked, and fiendish enjoyment of her sister's distress. It is certain, however, that it did cause him pleasure, for he would burst into peals of rasping, metallic laughter, swaying insanely on his perch, drawing long breaths, and apparently becoming quite exhausted with his mirth. If Miss Eliza-Ann made an attempt to touch him, he would hastily sidle away out of reach, and resume his hoarse, derisive laughter in safety. Our gentle friend was made very unhappy by these exhibitions, which usually ended by Miss Eliza-Ann's assuming the red bandana, and seating herself at her writing with an injured air, while Polly clucked and

glowered from his corner, and Miss Mary-Ellen hastily brought forth some new curiosity to attract our wandering attention.

One thing of which we never tired was a pair of Chinese picture-books, with paintings on rice paper in clear and brilliant colors. There was, of course, no attempt at perspective, and we were much entertained by the little mandarins walking calmly about in the sky, quite over the heads of the jugglers with their yellow balls, and the women under flat-topped umbrellas. A pair of carved ivory chop-sticks also appeared during the display of Chinese curiosities, and Miss Eliza-Ann, from her corner, threw in a few darkly learned remarks concerning Confucius, to which we listened with respect and vacuity. Miss Eliza-Ann was always ready enough to give us useful information, and she was generally called upon to tell us about a curious Japanese bonze in painted clay, with naked chest and stomach. It had an ugly, wrinkled face, and was squatted on its feet. Miss Eliza-Ann explained all about it in very long words, but we only gathered that the bonze was a holy man or priest, and we secretly thought it a pity that while his robes were otherwise so voluminous, so much of his person should be exposed to the inclemency of the weather.

A department more modern, but not less attractive, of Miss Mary-Ellen's cupboard was the shelf of knick-knacks which kind friends had given her, and which she hoarded in little boxes and baskets with almost childish pleasure. Many of these things were oddly trivial as gifts to a grown woman, but the truth was that many of Miss Mary-Ellen's friends had evidently never realized her growing up; at least, they still took a simple delight in bringing to her tiny fancy boxes, miniature fans, baskets of pink sugar, and microscopic books, all of which were received as they were given, and preserved with great care.

On rare, memorable days our hostess would gladden us by bestowing upon us some of these desirable objects.

"Let me see," she would muse, regarding fondly a tiny bird-cage of gilded wire, or a barley baby tucked snugly into a sugary cradle. "I have had this five years, and it has given me much pleasure. I think I can spare it now to give pleasure to somebody else. You may have it, my dear, and I hope you will keep it carefully."

The only two of these presents which lasted us for any length of time were a little bonnet of yellow sugar, decorated with a wreath of miniature roses, and a small book. The bonnet was my sister's, and was kept for some years in a box of cotton, until one hapless day we found it broken, by the cold we always supposed. Its owner shed bitter tears over the loss, while her more practical sister suggested that, since it was broken, we might as well see how it tasted. This we proceeded to do, and the result was pasty and disappointing in the extreme. My book was a small black volume, entitled *Frank and Flora*, being the history of a pair of children of such an aggressive

and rampant state of morality that but for the fact that it told what they had to eat and drink upon every occasion it would have been utterly unendurable.

We always loved Miss Mary-Ellen's gifts, however, for they took a grace from the gentle giver, and a charm beyond belief from the delightful cupboard which once had been their home.

Dear Miss Mary-Ellen and her sister have long since gone — a loving but incongruous pair — to a better world. I am quite certain that the same sort of after life could never satisfy them both. The quaint old house yet stands, but it is occupied by strangers. They may be, and doubtless are, the most delightful of people, and yet it seems to me all wrong that they should live in that house. The world is out of joint with all these changes. I would not peep into the old mansion, had I the chance, for I like to fancy everything still as it used to be: yet I cannot help sometimes wondering who owns the parrot's corner now; what furniture has deposed Miss Eliza-Ann's table, with its books and globe; above all, what these new folk keep in Miss Mary-Ellen's cupboard.

Eleanor Putnam.

SIBYLLINE BARTERING.

FATE, the gray Sibyl, with kind eyes above

Closely locked lips, brought youth a merry crew

Of proffered friends; the price, self-slaying love.

Proud youth repulsed them. She and they withdrew.

Then she brought half the troop; the cost, the same.

My man's heart wavered: should I take the few,

And pay the whole? But while I went and came,

Fate had decided. She and they withdrew.

Once more she came, with two. Now life's midday

Left fewer hours before me. Lonelier grew

The house and heart. But should the late purse pay

The earlier price? And she and they withdrew.

At last I saw Age his forerunners send.

Then came the Sibyl, still with kindly eyes
And close-locked lips, and offered me one friend, —
Thee, my one darling! With what tears and cries

I claimed and claim thee; ready now to pay
The perfect love that leaves no self to slay!

Andrew Hedbrook.

A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

XLVIII.

"Two little girls. He came over to tell us yesterday. Poor Theo! He is pleased, of course, but I think half ashamed too. It seems a little ridiculous to have twins, and the first."

"I can't think how you can say it is ridiculous. It is very interesting. But nowadays people seem to be ashamed of having children at all. It used to be thought the strength of a country, and doing your duty to the state. But people have different notions now."

"Well," said the rector, "I should have thought Theo would be pleased; for he likes to be original in everything, and two little girls are as unlike as possible to one little boy."

Mrs. Warrender's eyes shot forth a gleam, half of humorous acquiescence, half of irritation that Mr. Wilberforce should have divined her son's state of mind. She had come to the Warren with Chatty for a few weeks, for what they called "change;" though the change of a six miles' journey was not much. The Warren bore a very different aspect now from that which it had borne in former days. It was light and cheerful; some new rooms had been built, which broke the commonplace outline of the respectable house. It was newly furnished with furniture not at all resembling the mahogany catafalques. Only the hall, which had been old-fash-

ioned and harmonious, in which Chatty was attending to the flowers, was the same; and so far as that went, it might have been the very day on which Dick Cavendish had paid his first visit, when Chatty with her bowl of roses had walked, as he declared, into his heart. There were still roses of the second bloom, with the heat of July in their fervent hearts: and she stood at the table arranging them, changed, indeed, but not so changed as to affect the indifferent spectator, to whom she still seemed a part of the background, a figure passive though sweet, with no immediate vocation in life. Old Joseph, too, was in the depths of the hall, just visible, doing something, — something that was not of the least urgency or importance, but which kept him about and hearing all that passed. He and his old wife were in charge of the Warren, in the present changed days: and though they both half resented the fact that the young master had abandoned his own house, they were yet more than half pleased to have this tranquillity and ease at the end of their long service. To do them justice, they had been glad to receive their old mistress and her daughter, welcoming them as visitors with a sense of hospitality, and declaring that they did not mind the trouble, notwithstanding that Joseph's health was bad, and late dinner had always been an affliction to his wife.

"I hope," Mrs. Warrender said, continuing the conversation, "that the two little girls will soon make their own welcome, as babies have a way of doing, and convince everybody that they are much sweeter than any one little boy."

This was how Theo's mother took the sting out of the rector's speech, which was not intended to have any sting, and was only a stray gleam of insight amid his confused realization of the state of affairs; but it was so true that it was difficult to believe it was that, and no more. The Wilberforces had come to inquire, not only for Lady Markland and her babies, but into many other things, could they have found the opportunity. But Chatty's presence stopped even Mrs. Wilberforce's mouth. And when the visitors went in to inspect all the improvements and the new decorations and furniture, Chatty came with them, and followed everywhere, which seemed very strange to the rector's wife. Did she mean to prevent them from talking? Was that her purpose? She took little part in the conversation. She was more silent than she had ever been, though she had never been given to much conversation; and yet she came with them wherever they went, putting an effectual stop to the questions that quivered on the very edge of Mrs. Wilberforce's lips. Nor had the rector the sense, which he might so easily have had, to engage her in talk, to occupy her attention, and leave his wife free to speak. Anybody but a man would have had the sense to have done that: but a man is an unteachable creature, and never will divine the things that are required of him which cannot be told him in plain words. Accordingly, the whole party strolled from one room to another, commenting upon the new arrangements without a possibility of any enlightenment as to the real state of affairs. Mrs. Wilberforce was very indignant with her husband as they left, — an indigna-

tion that seemed quite uncalled for to this injured man.

"What you could have done? Why, you could have talked to Chatty. You could have interested her on some subject or another, about where they were abroad, or about the parish, or — Dear me, there are always plenty of subjects. When you knew how anxious I was to find out all about it! Dick Cavendish is a great deal more a friend of yours than he was of theirs until this unfortunate business came about, and it seems very strange that we should know nothing. Why, I don't know even what to call her, — whether she is still Miss Warrender, or what she is."

"You would not call her Miss Warrender in any case," said the rector, with a little self-assertion. "But of course you know that is her name: for the moment the other wife was proved to be living, poor Chatty's marriage was as if it had not been."

"Well, that is what I cannot understand, Herbert: to be married just like anybody else, and the ring put on, and everything (by the way, I did notice that she does not wear her ring), and then that it should be as if it had not been. Bigamy one can understand, but how it should come to mean nothing! And do you intend me to believe that she could marry somebody else, the same as if it had never happened?"

"To-morrow, if she likes, — and I wish she would, poor Chatty. It would be the best way of cutting the knot."

"Then I can tell you one thing that all your superior information would never teach you," cried Mrs. Wilberforce, — "*that she never will!*" You may take my word for it. Chatty has far too much principle. What! be married to one man in church, and then go and be married to another! Never, Herbert! Oh, you may tell me the ceremony is nothing, and that they can have nothing to say to each other, and all that: it may be quite true, but that Chatty will

ever marry any one else is not true. She will never do it. For anything I can tell, or you can tell, she may never see Dick Cavendish again. But she will never marry any one else. It is very hard to be sure of anything nowadays, when all the landmarks are being changed, and the country is going headlong to — But if I know anything, I hope I know Chatty Warrender: and *that*, you may be sure, she will never do.”

This flood of eloquence silenced the rector: and indeed he had no objection to make; for he was aware of all those sacred prejudices that are bound in the hearts of women everywhere, and especially of ladies in the country, and he believed it very likely that Chatty would feel herself bound forever by what was no bond at all.

In the mean time there had been only one letter from Dick, a short and hasty one, telling that he was better, explaining that he had not been able to let them know of his illness, and announcing that he was off again as soon as he should be able to move upon his search. Chatty and her mother wondered over this, without communicating its contents to any one. His search! — what did his search mean? There was no search wanted for those proceedings which he had declared were so easy and so certain at that far end of the world. Evidently they had not been so easy, and the words that he used were very strange to the ladies. He had no doubt, he said, of his success. Doubt! He had spoken of it before he went away as a thing which only required asking for, to have; and the idea that there was no doubt at once gave embodiment and force to the doubt which had never existed. Mrs. Warrender had joined the forces of the opposing party from the moment she had read this letter. After a day or two of great depression and seriousness, she had taken Chatty into her arms and advised her to give up the lover,

the husband, who was no husband, and perhaps an unfaithful lover. “I said nothing at first,” Mrs. Warrender had said with tears. “I stood by him when there was so much against him. I believed every word he said, notwithstanding everything. But now, my darling, — oh, Chatty, now! He was to be gone for three months at the outside, and now it is eight. And he was quite sure of being able to do his business at once; but now he says he has no doubt, and that he is off on his search. His search for what? Oh, my dearest, I am most reluctant to say it, but I fear Theo is right. To think of a man trying, and perhaps trying in vain, to get a divorce in order to marry *you*! Chatty, it is a thing that cannot be; it is impossible, it is disreputable. A divorced man is bad enough, — you know how Minnie spoke even of that, — but a man who is trying for a divorce with the object — Chatty, my darling, it is a thing which cannot be.”

Chatty was not a girl of many words, nor did she commit herself to argument: she would enter into no controversy with her mother. She said only that she was married to Dick. It might be that he was not married to her. She might never see him again: but she was bound forever. And in the mean time, until they knew all the circumstances, how could they discuss the matter? When Dick returned and gave them the necessary information, then it would be time enough: at present she had nothing else to say. And nothing more could be got from her. Minnie came and quoted Eustace; but Chatty only walked out of the room, leaving her sister in possession of the field, though without any of the satisfaction of a victory. And Theo came, but he contented himself with talking to his mother. Something of natural diffidence or feeling prevented him from assailing Chatty in the stronghold of that modest determination which they all called obstinacy. When

Theo came he made his mother miserable, almost commanding her to use her authority, declaring that it would be her fault if this farce went on, — this disreputable farce, he called it; while poor Mrs. Warrender, now as much opposed to it as he, had to bear the brunt of his objurgations until she was driven to make a stand for the very object which she most disapproved.

In the midst of all this Chatty stood firm. If she wept, it was in the solitude of her own chamber, from which even her mother was shut out; if she ever wavered or broke down, it was in secret. Externally, to the view of the world, she was perfectly calm and cheerful, fulfilling all her little duties with the composure of one who has never known what tragedy means. A hundred eager eyes had been upon her, but no one had been able to tell how Chatty "bore it." She said nothing to anybody. It was thought that she held her head a little higher than usual and was less disposed for society: but then she had never loved society. She arranged her flowers, she took her walks, she carried beef tea and port wine to the sick people. She even sat down daily at the usual hour and took out her muslin work, a height of self-command to which it was indeed difficult to reach. But what woman could do Chatty would do, and she had accomplished even that. There are many in the world who must act and cannot wait, but there are also some who, recognizing action to be impossible, can sit still with the whole passive force of their being, until that passiveness becomes almost sublime. Chatty was of this kind. Presumably she did not torment herself hour by hour and day by day, as her mother did, by continual re-arguments of the whole question: but if she did she kept the process altogether to herself.

There had been one interview, indeed, which had tried her very much, and that had taken place a day or two after

her arrival at the Warren, when she had met Lizzie Hampson on the road. Lizzie had shrunk from the young lady in whose life she had interfered with such extraordinary effect, but Chatty had insisted on speaking to her, and had called her almost imperiously. "Why do you run away? Do you think I am angry with you?" she cried.

"Oh, Miss Chatty!" The girl had no breath or courage to say more.

"You did right, I believe," Chatty said. "It would have been better if you had come and told me quietly at home, before — anything had happened. But I do not blame you. I think you did right."

"I never knew till the last minute that it would hurt you so!" Lizzie cried. "I knew it might be bad for the gentleman, and that he could be tried and put in prison; but she would never, never, have done that. She wanted him to be free. It was only when I knew, Miss Chatty, what it would do to you — and then it was too late. I went to Highcombe, but you had gone from there; and then when I got to London" —

A flush came over Chatty's face, as all the extraordinary scene came back to her. "It seems strange that it should be you who were mixed up with it all," she said. "Things happen very strangely, I think, in life; one can never tell. If you have no objection, I should like you to tell me something of — I saw her — do you remember? here, on this very road, and you told me — ah! that to put such people in penitentiaries would not do; that they wanted to enjoy themselves. Do you remember? It seemed very strange to me. And to think that" — This moved Chatty more than all the rest had done. Her soft face grew crimson, her eyes filled with tears.

"To think that she — Oh, Miss Chatty, I feel as if I ought to go down on my knees and ask you to forgive me

for ever having anything to do with her."

"That was no fault of yours," said Chatty very softly. "It can have been nobody's fault. It is just because — it has happened so: which makes it harder and harder. None of us meant any harm — except perhaps" —

"Miss Chatty, she didn't mean any harm to you. She meant no harm to any one. She was never brought up to care for what was good. She was brought up just to please her fancy. Oh, the like of you can't understand, if you were to be told ever so, nor should I if I hadn't seen it. They make a sort of principle of that, just to please their fancy. We're taught here that to please ourselves is mostly wrong: but not there. It's their religion in a kind of a way, out in those wild places, just to do whatever they like; and then when you come to grief, if you are plucky and take it cheerful — The very words sound dreadful, here where everything is so different," Lizzie said, with a shudder, looking round her, as if there might be ears in the trees.

Chatty did not ask any further questions. She walked along very gravely, with her head bent. "It makes one's heart ache," she said. There was an ease in speaking to this girl who had played so strange a part in her life, who knew her trouble as no one else did. "It makes one's heart ache," she repeated. She was not thinking of herself. "And where is she now? Do you hear of her? Do you know what has become of her?"

"Only one thing can become of her," said Lizzie. "She'll fall lower and lower. Oh, you don't think a poor creature can fall any lower than that, I know," for Chatty had looked at her with wonder, shaking her head; "but lower and lower in her dreadful way. One day there," said Lizzie philosophically, but sadly, pointing to the high wall of the Elms, "with her fine dresses

and her horses and carriages, and the next in dirt and misery. And then she'll die, perhaps in the hospital. Oh, she'll not be long in anybody's way. They die soon, and then they are done with, and everybody is glad of it" — the girl cried, with a burst of sudden tears.

Chatty stopped suddenly upon the road. They were opposite to the gate from which so often the woman they were discussing had driven forth in her short-lived finery; the stillness as of death had fallen on the uninhabited house, and all was tranquil on the country road, stretching on one side across the tranquil fields, on the other towards the clustering houses of the village and the low spire which pointed to heaven. "Lizzie," she said, "if it is never put right, — and perhaps it will never be put right, for who can tell? — if you will come with me, who know so much about it, we will go and be missionaries to these poor girls. I will tell them my story, and how I am married but have no husband, and how three lives are all ruined, — all ruined forever. And we will tell them that love is not like that, — that it is faithful and true; and that women should never be like that, — that women should be — Oh, I do not believe it, I do not believe it! Of her own free will no woman could ever be like that!" Chatty cried, like Desdemona, suddenly clenching her soft hands in a passion of indignation and pity. "We will go and tell them, Lizzie!"

"Oh, Miss Chatty! They know it all, every word," Lizzie cried.

XLIX.

Two little girls are as unlike as anything can be to one little boy. This gave Warrender a sort of angry satisfaction in the ridiculous incident which had happened in his life. For it was a ridiculous incident. When a man is hardened to

it, when he has had several children and is habituated to paternal honors, such an event may be amusing and interesting. But scarcely a year after his marriage, when he was not quite four and twenty, to be the father of twins! He felt sometimes as if it must be the result of a conspiracy to make him ridiculous. The neighboring potentates, when he met them, laughed as they congratulated him. "If you are going to continue like this, you will be a patriarch before you know where you are," one of them said. It was a joke to the entire country round about. Twins! He felt scarcely any of the stirrings of tenderness in his heart which are supposed to move a young father, when he looked at the two little yawning, gaping morsels of humanity. If there had been but one, perhaps!—but two! He was the laughing-stock of the neighborhood, he felt. The sight of his wife, pale and smiling, touched his heart, indeed. But even that sight was not without its pangs. For alas, she knew all about this position which was so novel to him. She understood the babies and their wants, as it was natural a mother who was already experienced in motherhood should. And finally she was so far carried away by the privileges and the expansion of the moment as to ask him—him! the last authority to be consulted on such a subject—whether Geoff was delighted to hear of his little sisters. Geoff's little sisters! The thought of that boy having anything to do, any relationship to claim, with *his* children clouded Warrender's face. He turned it away, and Lady Markland, in the sweet enthusiasm of the moment, fortunately did not perceive the change. She thought, in her tender folly, that this would make everything right; that Geoff, as the brother of his little girls, would be something nearer to Theo, claiming a more favorable consideration. She preserved this hope for some time, notwithstanding a great many signs to the contrary.

Even Theo's dark face, when he found Geoff one day in her room, looking with great interest at the children, did not alarm the mother, who was determined not to part with her illusion. "Do you think it right to have a boy of Geoff's age here in your room?" he said. "Oh, Theo, my own boy,—what harm can it do?" she had said,—so foolishly! forgetting that Geoff's crime in the eyes of his young step-father was exactly this, that he was her own boy.

Thus the circumstance which every one hoped was to make the most favorable change in the position only intensified its difficulties. Geoff naturally was more thrown into the society of his step-father during his mother's seclusion, and Geoff was very full of the new event and new relationships, and was no wiser than his mother. When they lunched together the boy was so far forgetful of former experiences as to ply Theo with questions, as he had not done since the days when the young man was his tutor, and everything was on so different a footing. Geoff's excitement made him forget all the prudence he had acquired. His "I say, Warrender," over and over repeated drove Theo to heights of exasperation indescribable. Everything about Geoff was offensive to his step-father: his ugly little face, the nervous grimaces which he still made, the familiarity of his address, but above all the questions which it was impossible to silence. Lady Markland averted them more or less when she was present, and Geoff had learnt prudence to some extent: but in his excitement he remembered these precautions no more.

"I say, Warrender! shall you take mamma away? Nurse says she must go away for a change. I think Markland is always the nicest place going, don't you?"

"No: I prefer the Warren, as you know."

"Oh!" Geoff could scarcely keep out of his voice the wondering contempt

with which he received this suggestion: but here his natural insight prevailed, and a sort of sympathetic genius which the little fellow possessed. "To be sure, I like the Warren very much indeed," he said. "I suppose what makes me like Markland best is being born here."

"And I was born there," Theo said.

"Yes, I know. I wonder which the babies will like best. They are born here, like me: I hope they will like Markland. It will be fun seeing them run about, both the same size and so like. They say twins are always so like. Shall we have to tie a red ribbon round one and a blue ribbon round the other, to know which is which?"

To this question the father of the babies vouchsafed no reply.

"Nurse says they are not a bit like me," Geoff continued, in a tone of regret.

"Like you! Why should they be like you?" said Warrender, with a flush of indignation.

"But why not, Warrender? Brothers and sisters are alike often. You and Chatty are a little alike. When I am at Oxford, and they come to see me, I shall like fellows to say, Oh, I saw your sisters, Markland."

"Your sisters!" Theo could scarcely contain his disgust, all the more that he saw the old butler keeping an eye upon him with a sort of severity. The servants in the house, Theo thought, all took part with Geoff, and looked to him as their future master. He continued hastily: "I can only hope they will prefer the Warren, as I do: for that will be their home."

"Oh!" cried Geoff again, opening round eyes. "But if it isn't our home, how can it be theirs? They don't want a home all to themselves."

"I think they do," said Theo shortly.

The boy gave him a furtive glance, and thought it wise to change the subject. "But Mrs. Warrender is there now. Oh, I say! She will be granny

to the babies. I should like to call her granny, too. Will she let me, do you think, Warrender? She is always so kind to me."

"I should advise you not to try."

"Why, Warrender? Would she be angry? She is always very kind. I went to see her once, as soon as she came home, and she was awfully kind, and understood what I wanted." Geoff paused here, suddenly catching himself up, and remembering — with a forlorn sense that he had gone a long way beyond them in his little life — the experiences, which were sufficiently painful, of that day.

"It requires a very wise person to do that," said Warrender, with an angry smile.

"Yes, to understand you quite right even when you don't say anything. I say, Warrender! if mamma has to go away for a change, where shall we go?"

"We!" said Warrender significantly. "Are you also in want of a change?"

The boy looked up at him suddenly, with a hasty flush. The tears came to his brave little eyes. He was overpowered by the sudden suggestion, and could not find a word to say.

"Markland is the best change for you, after Eton," said Theo. "You don't want to travel with a nursery, I suppose."

Geoff felt something rise in his throat. Why, it was his own nursery, he wanted to say. It was his own family. Where should he go but where they went? But the words were stopped on his lips, and his magnanimous little heart swelled high. Oh, if he could but fly to his mother! — but to her he had learnt never now to fly.

"Wherever we may go," said Warrender coldly, "I think you had much better spend your holidays here;" and he got up from the table, leaving Geoff in a tumult of feelings which words can scarcely describe. He had suffered a great deal during the past year, and

had said little. A sort of preternatural consciousness that he must keep his own secret, that he must betray nothing to his mother, had come upon him. He sat now silent, his little face twitching and working, a sudden new, unlooked-for horror stealing over him: that he was to be separated from his mother; that he was to be left behind while they went away. It did not seem possible, and yet, with all the rapidity of a child's imagination, Geoff's mind flashed over what might happen, — he to be left alone here, while *they* went away. He saw his mother go smiling into the carriage, thinking of the babies, in their little white hoods, little dolls. Oh, no, dear little helpless creatures, to whom the boy's heart went out; his babies as well as his mother's. But of course she would think of them. She must think of them. And Geoff would be left behind, with no one, nobody to speak to, the great rooms all empty, only the servants about. He remembered what it had been when his mother was married: then he had the hope that she would come back to him, that all would be well; but now he knew that never, never, as of old, could he have her back. Geoff did not budge from the table for some time after, but sat with his elbows on it and his head in his hands, in the attitude which he had so often been scolded for, with nobody to scold him or take any notice. He thought to himself that he might put his elbows on the table as much as he liked, and nobody would care. It was only the return of the servants to clear the table, and the old butler's question, "What's the matter, Master Geoff?" that roused him. The butler's tone was far too sympathetic. He was an old servant, and the only one in the house who did not call poor little Geoff *My lord*. But the boy was not going to accept sympathy. He sprang up from the table, with a "Nothing's the matter. I'm going out for a ride," and hurried towards the

stables, which were now his resource more and more.

This knowledge rankled in Geoff's heart through all the time of his mother's convalescence. He was very brave, very magnanimous, without knowing that he was either. That he would not vex his mother was the determination of his soul. She was very sweet, sweeter than ever, but pale, and her hands so thin that you could see the light through them. Though he anticipated with a dull anguish the time when she should go away, when Warrender would take her away, leaving him behind, Geoff resolved that he would say nothing about it, that he would not make her unhappy. He would bear it; one could bear anything when one tried, even spending the holidays by one's self. But his heart sank at the thought. Supposing she were to stay a month away, — that was four weeks, it was thirty days, — and he alone, all alone in Markland: and when she came back it would be time for him to go to school. Sometimes he felt as if he must cry out when he thought of it; but he would not say a word, he would not complain; he would bear it rather than vex *mamma*. When she came down-stairs she was still very pale. She began to walk about a little, but only with Warrender's arm. She drove out, but the babies had to be with her in the carriage; there was no room for Geoff. He twisted his poor little face out of shape altogether in the effort to get rid of the scalding tears, but he would not betray the state of his mind; nothing, he vowed to himself, should make him worry *mamma*.

One day he rode over to the Warren, pondering upon what Theo had said: that the Warren must be liked best by the babies, because it was their home. Would it ever really be their home? Would Warrender be so hard as that, to take away *mamma* and the babies for good, and leave a fellow all alone in Markland, because it was Geoff's, and

not his own? Geoff's little gray face was as serious as that of a man of eighty, and almost as full of wrinkles. He thought and thought what he could do to please Warrender. Though his heart rose against this interloper, this destroyer of his home, Geoff was wise, and knew that to keep his mother he must please her husband. What could he do? Not like him, — that was impossible. Riding along, now slowly, now quickly, rather at the pony's will than at his own, Geoff, with loose reins in his hands and a slouch in his shoulders which was the despair of Black, pondered the subject till his little mind was all in confusion. What could he do to please Warrender? He would be good to the babies, by nature, and because he liked the two funny little things, but that would not matter. He would do almost anything Warrender chose to tell him, but that would n't please him. What was there, then, that would do? He did not know what he could do. He rode very carelessly, almost as much at the mercy of the pony as on the occasion when Theo picked him from under the wheels of the high phaeton; but either the pony was more wise, or Geoff stronger, for there was no question now of being thrown. When he came in sight of the little gate, he saw some one standing there, at sight of whom he quickened his pace. He knew the general aspect of the man's figure though he could not see his face, and a welcome new excitement made the heart jump up again in Geoff's breast. He hurried along in a sudden cloud of dust, and threw himself off the pony like a little acrobat. "Mr. Cavendish!" cried Geoff, "have you come back?" with a glow of pleasure which drove all his troubles away.

It was Dick, very brown, very thin, a little wild in his aspect and dress. "Hallo, Geoff!" he replied. "Yes, I have come back. Didn't they expect me to come back?"

"Oh, I don't know. I think they wondered."

"That's how it is in this world," said the stranger: "nobody trusts you; as soon as you are out of sight — oh, I don't say you're out of mind, but nobody trusts you. They think that perhaps, after all, you were a villain all the time."

To this, naturally, Geoff had no reply to make; he said, "Are you going in by that door, Mr. Cavendish?" Upon which Dick burst into a loud laugh, which Geoff knew meant anything but laughing.

"What do you think, Geoff?" he cried. "My wife's inside, and they've locked me out here. That's a joke, is n't it?"

"I don't think it's any joke. And Chatty wants you so. Come round to the other door."

"Are you sure of that?" said Dick. "Here's that fellow been talking, — that Thynne fellow, — telling me" — Then he paused and looked at the boy with another laugh. "You're a queer confidant for a poor vagabond, little Geoff."

"Is it because I'm little?" cried Geoff. "But though I am little there are a heap of things I know. I know they are all against you except Chatty. Come along and see Chatty. I want to go to her this moment and tell her" —

"I thought," said Cavendish, "I'd wait for her here. I don't want to make a mummy of that fellow, my brother-in-law, don't you know, the first moment. Tell Chatty — tell my wife, Geoff, that I am waiting for her here."

Geoff did not wait for another word, but clambered on to his pony again and was off like the wind, round by the village to the other gate. Meantime Dick stood and leaned upon the wooden paling. His face was sharp and thin with illness, with eagerness and suspense, his complexion browned and paled out of its healthful English tints. But this was not because he was weak any longer, or in diminished health. He was worn by

incessant traveling, by anxiety and the fluctuation of hope and fear; yet that great tension had strung his nerves and strengthened his vitality, though it had worn off every superfluous particle of flesh. A keen anxiety mingled with indignation was in his eyes as he looked across the gate which the clergyman had fastened against him, — indignation, yet also a smile. From the moment when Geoff's little voice had broken upon his angry reverie, Dick had begun to recover himself. "Chatty wants you so." It was only a child that spoke. But a child does not flatter or deceive, and this was true. What Eustace Thynne thought, what anybody thought, was of little consequence. Chatty! — the simple name brought a softening glow to Dick's eye. Would she come and open to him? Would she reverse the judgment of the family by her own act, or must it be he who should emancipate Chatty? He waited with something of his old gayety rising in his mind. The position was ludicrous. They had shut him out, but it could not be for long.

Geoff galloped his pony to the gate, and up the little avenue, which was still very shady and green, though so much of the wood had been cut. He threw himself off his pony and flung the reins to the gardener's boy, who stood gazing open-mouthed at the little lord's headlong race. The doors were not open, as usual, but Geoff knew that the drawing-room windows were seldom fastened in the summer weather. He darted along round the corner of the house, and fell against one of the windows, pushing it open. In the drawing-room there seemed a number of people assembled, whom he saw vaguely without paying any attention, — Mr. and Mrs. Thynne, and Warrender, in a group, talking with their heads together; Mrs. Warrender standing between them and the tranquil figure of Chatty, who sat at work at the other end of the room, taking no part in the consultation of the

others, paying no heed to them. Chatty had an almost ostentation of disregard, of separation from the others, in her isolated place and the work with which she was busy. She looked up with a little alarm, when Geoff came stumbling through the window: but she did not look as if she expected any one, as if she had heard who was so near at hand. The boy was covered with dust and hot with haste, his forehead bathed in perspiration. He called out to her almost before he was in the room: "Chatty! Mr. Cavendish is outside at the little gate. They will not let him come in. He sent me to tell you" —

Chatty started to her feet, and the group in the end of the room scattered and hastened towards the new-comer. Theo seized his step-son by the collar, half choking the boy. "You confounded imp!" he cried, "what business is that of yours?"

"Geoff, where, where?" Chatty rushed to the child and caught his hand. He struggled in Theo's grasp, in a desperate, nervous anguish, fearing he could not tell what, — that he would be strangled, that Chatty would be put in some sort of prison. The strangling was in progress now; he called out in haste, that he might get it out before his breath was gone: —

"Oh, run, Chatty! The little gate in the road — the wooden gate." She seemed to flash past his eyes, — his eyes which were turning in his head, with the pressure and the shaking of Warrender's hand. Then the child felt himself suddenly pitched forward, and fell, stunned for the moment, and thinking, before consciousness failed him, that all was over, and that he was killed indeed; yet scarcely sorry, for Chatty had his message and he had fulfilled his commission before he died.

Chatty flew along the shady paths, a line of whiteness fluttering through sunshine and shadow. She called out her lover's name as she approached the gate.

She had neither fear nor doubt in her mind. She did not know what news he was going to bring her, what conclusion was to be put to the story. She called to him as soon as he was within hearing, asking no questions, taking no precautions. "Dick, Dick!" Behind her, but at some distance, Minnie too fluttered along, inspired by virtuous indignation, which is only less swift than love and happiness. The gentlemen remained behind, even Eustace perceiving that the matter had now passed beyond their hands. This is one of the points in which men have the advantage over women. They have a practical sense of the point at which opposition becomes impossible. And Warrender had the additional sense that he had done that in his fury which at his leisure it would be difficult to account for. Mrs. Warrender, who had not been informed of the crisis, nor known upon what matter her children were consulting, was too much horrified by what had happened to Geoff to think even of Chatty. She raised the boy up and put him on a sofa, and bathed his forehead, her own heart aching and bleeding, while Warrender stood dumbly by, looking at his handiwork, his passion still hot in him, and a half frenzy of dislike and repugnance in his mind.

L.

"Dick!" Curiously enough Dick had not thought till then that even a high gate may be vaulted by a man whose heart has leaped it before him, and who is in perfect training and knows no fear. He had been more discouraged by Eustace Thynne than any authority on the part of that poor creature at all warranted, and his heart had failed him still more when he thought that perhaps Chatty might have been talked over, and might stand by him no longer. She was his wife, but what if her heart had

given him up! But when a man hears the voice he loves best in the world calling him, everything takes a different aspect. "Dick!" Her voice came first faint, so that he scarcely believed it; then nearer and nearer, giving life to the silent world. The thin brown face of the vagabond, as he had called himself, grew crimson with a flush of happiness and new life. He could not wait until she came; his soul flew to meet her in a great revulsion of confidence and joy. The gate was high, but he was eager and she was coming. He put his sinewy, thin hands upon it, and was over in a moment. And there she came, flying, fluttering, her light dress making a line of whiteness under the trees. She did not stop to ask a question, but ran straight to him, into his arms. "Dick, Dick!" and "Chatty, my darling, at last!" — that was all they said.

Minnie did not run so fast. She had not the same inducement; for opposition, though very nearly as swift, has not quite the same impetus as love. She only came up to them when these first greetings were over, and when, to the consciousness of both, life had taken up its threads again exactly where they had broken off. Chatty did not ask any questions, — his presence was answer enough to all questions; but indeed she did not think of any. Everything else went out of her mind except that he was there.

"Mr. Cavendish!" Minnie came up breathless, putting her hand to her side. "Oh, Chatty, you are shameless! Do you know what you are doing? It was his duty — to satisfy us first. Mr. Cavendish, if she is lost to — all sense of shame" —

Panting, she had got up to them, and was pulling Chatty away from him by her arm.

"There is no shame in the matter," he said. "But, Chatty, your sister is right, and I must explain everything to your family at once. There is no time

to lose, for the train leaves at six, and I want to take you away directly. If you can be ready" —

"Yes, Dick, I can be ready. I am ready whenever you please."

He pressed her arm, which she had placed within his, with a look that said everything there was to say. But Minnie replied with a scream: "Take her away! What right have you to take her away? Eustace will never consent, and my mother — oh, even my mother will not hear of that. If you were a hundred times divorced, — which it is a shame to think of, — you can't take her away like that; you will have to be married again."

"I am sorry to push past you, Mrs. Thynne. It is your husband's fault, who stopped my entrance in the natural way. But we have no time to lose." He looked back, waving his hand to Minnie, whose wrath took away the little breath she had left. "I am not a divorced man," he said. Mrs. Eustace looked after them with feelings indescribable. They went hurrying along, the two figures melting into one, swift, straight, carried as by a wind of triumph. What did he mean? It was horrible to Minnie that she could not go so fast, that she had to wait and take breath. With a pang of angry disappointment, she felt at once that they were on the winning side, that they must inevitably reach the Warren before she could, and that thus she would not hear what Dick had to say. It may here be added that Minnie had, like Chatty, the most perfect confidence that all was right. She no more believed that Dick would have come here had the end of his mission been unsatisfactory than she believed that night was day. She would not have owned this for the world, and she was vexed and mortified by the conviction, but yet at the bottom of her heart, being not at all so bad as she wished to believe she was, she felt a sense of consolation and relief, which made it at once easier and more tantalizing to have to wait.

Foolish Chatty held Dick's arm fast, and kept up a murmur of happiness. "Oh, Dick, are you sure it is you? Have you come at last? Are you well now? And I that could not go to you, that did not know, that had no one to ask! Oh, Dick, didn't you want me when you were ill? Oh, Dick! oh, Dick!" After all, his mere name was the most satisfactory thing to say. And as he hurried her along, almost flying over the woodland path, Chatty, too, was soon out of breath, and ended in a blissful incapacity to say or do anything except to be carried along with him in his eager progress towards the tribunal which he had to face.

Eustace Thynne opposed his entrance, but quite ineffectually, at the drawing-room door. Dick with his left hand was more than a match for the Reverend Eustace. Warrender stood in the middle of the room, with his head towards the sofa, over which his mother was bending, though his eyes turned to the new-comers as they entered. He made a step towards them as if to stop them, but a movement on the sofa drew him back again as by some fascination. It was Geoff, who struggled up with a little pale, gray face and a cut on his forehead, like a little ghost. His sharp voice piped forth all at once in the silence: "I told her, Mr. Cavendish. I gave her your message. Oh, I'm all right, I'm all right. But I told Chatty. It don't matter about me."

"Mr. Cavendish!" cried Mrs. Warrender, turning from the child. She was trembling with the excitement of these hurrying events, though the sick terror she had been seized with in respect to Geoff was passing away. "Mr. Cavendish, my son is right in this, — that before you saw Chatty we should have had an account of you, he and I."

"I should have said so, too, in other circumstances," said Dick, holding Chatty's arm closely within his own. "If my presence or my touch could harm

her, even with the most formal fool" — he flashed a look at Eustace, angrily, which glowed over the pale parson like a passing lamp, but left him quite unconscious. "As it is, you have a right to the fullest explanation, but not to keep my wife from me for a moment."

"She is not your wife," cried Warrender. "Leave him, Chatty. Even in the best of circumstances she cannot be your wife."

"Chatty, do not move. I have as full a right to hold her here as you have your wife, or any married man. Mrs. Warrender, I don't want to get angry. I will tell you my story at once. On our wedding-day, when that terrible interruption was, the poor creature whom I then thought, whom I then believed, to have been" —

"You mean Mrs. Cavendish, your lawful wife."

"Poor girl, do not call her by that name; she never bore it. She did not mean to do any harm. There was no sanctity to her in that or any other tie."

Chatty pressed his arm more closely in sympathy. Her clasp did not relax even at the recollection thus brought before her.

"She meant no harm, from her point of view. She scarcely meant to deceive me. Mrs. Warrender, it was a fiction all through. There has been no need of any divorce. She was already married when — she made believe to marry me. The delusion was mine alone. I hunted the man over half the continent. I did not dare to tell you what I was doing, lest it should prove to be a false hope. But at last I found him, and I have all the evidence. I have never had any wife but Chatty. She forgives me what was done in folly so long ago, before I ever saw her. There was no marriage. What was done was a mere idle form, in deference to my prejudices," he said, with a short laugh of excitement. "I was a fool, it appears, all through; but it was not as a wise man

that Chatty married me," he said, turning to her. "Our marriage is as true as ever marriage was. I have no wife but Chatty. Mrs. Warrender, I have all the evidence. Don't you believe me? Surely you must believe me!" Dick cried.

His voice was interrupted by a shrill little outburst from the sofa behind. "Hurrah! Hurrah!" cried little Geoff before Dick had ended. "Chatty, it was me that brought the first news! Chatty, are you happy now?"

Mrs. Warrender, in the act of going forward to the pair who stood before her awaiting her judgment, turned with a thrill of anxious terror. "Oh, hush, hush!" she cried, putting herself before the boy.

Theo, too, had turned round with a suppressed but passionate exclamation, clenching his hands. "Mother, I can think of nothing till that imp is out of the way."

"He shall go, Theo. I will see to that; but speak to them, — speak to them!" cried the mother, anxiously, bending over the sofa, with an indescribable tumult in her heart. She had to leave her own child's fate at its crisis to look after and protect this child who was none of hers, who was the stumbling-block in her son's way. And yet her heart condemned her son, and took part with the little intruder. Thus Chatty for the moment was left to stand alone before her husband's judge, but was not aware of it, thought nothing of it, in her confidence and joy. Warrender stood looking darkly on till his mother had taken his step-son out of the room. The pause, perhaps, was useful in calming the excitement of all. When the door closed Theo turned round, mastering himself with an effort. Geoff had diverted the rush of hasty temper which was natural to him. He looked upon the new-comer less severely.

"We can have no interest," he said, "but that your story should be true.

But it cannot rest on your word, Cavendish. You have been deceived once; you may be deceived again. My mother is no judge of points of law, and she is favorable, too favorable, to you. You had better come with us into another room, and let us see what proofs you have of what you say."

"That is quite just," said Dick. "I'd like you to kiss that little beggar for me, Chatty; he knows what it is to stand by a man in trouble. It is all right, Warrender. Of course it is the interest of all of us that there should be no mistake. Send for Wilberforce, who will be impartial; and if you could have Longstaffe, too" —

Minnie came in, out of breath, at this stage of the affairs. "What does he say, Eustace, — oh, what does he say? Are you sure it is true? What has he got to say? And what does he mean about Mr. Longstaffe and Mr. Wilberforce? Aren't you good enough for him? Can't you judge without Wilberforce? Wilberforce," she cried, with professional contempt for another clergyman, "is nothing so very wonderful; and he is *his* friend and will be sure to be on his side. Why can't Eustace do?"

Mrs. Warrender, with her anxious face, had now come back again alone. She went up to Dick, holding out both her hands. "God bless you," she said. "I believe you, dear Dick, every word you say. But everything must be made as clear as daylight, both for her sake and your own."

"I know it, dear mother," he replied. "I am quite ready. I should be the first to ask for a full examination. Take care of my Chatty while I show my papers. I want to take my wife away with me. I cannot be parted from her again."

"Oh, Dick! oh, Dick!" The mother, like the daughter, could find no other words to say.

Little Geoff found himself alone in Mrs. Warrender's room. She had taken

him there with much kindness and many tender words, and made a little nest for him upon the sofa. "Lie down and try to go to sleep," she said, stooping to kiss him, a caress which half pleased, half irritated, Geoff. But he obeyed, for his head was still aching and dazed with the suddenness and strangeness of all that had passed. To lie down and try to sleep was not so hard for him as for most children of his age, and for the first moment no movement of revolt was in him. He lay down in the silence, not unwilling to rest his head on a soft pillow. But the fire of excitement was in Geoff's veins, and a restlessness of energy and activity which after a minute or two forbade all possibility of rest. Something had happened to him which had never happened before. He had not been quite clear what it was at first; whether it was the wonder of Dick's return or of his own part in it, — the fact that he had been the messenger and had discharged his trust. But presently it all came to him, as he lay quietly with his aching head pressed against the cool pillow. Geoff had encountered many new experiences in the last two years of his life, but he had not known at any time what personal violence was. Everybody round him had made much of him; his delicate health had always been in the thoughts of those who were about him; and his rank, to which he was so indifferent, of which he was scarcely conscious, had made him important. Till Theo had appeared upon the scene, Geoff had been the central figure in his own little world. Since that time, the boy had suffered, with a magnanimity which few men could have equaled, a gradual deposition from most of the things he prized. He was no longer first; he had partially lost the mother who for so long had been his companion and play-fellow as well as the chief object in his existence. Many humiliations had come to the keen feelings and sensitive heart of the little dethroned boy. Many

a complaint and reproach had been on his lips, though none had got utterance. But now a deeper indignity still had befallen him. As Geoff lay in the room to which he had been banished to be out of Warrender's sight, all this swept across his little soul like a tempest. He remembered the suffocating sensation in his throat, the red mist in his eyes, the feeling that he had but a moment left in which to deliver his message; and then the giddy whirl of movement as he was flung away like a rag or a stone, the crash in his ears, the sharp blow which brought back his scattered faculties for a moment, only to banish them again in the temporary unconsciousness which brought all this tingling and thrilling into his ears. How had it all come about? It was Warrender who had seized him, who had flung him upon the floor, who had — had he? tried to kill him? had he tried to kill him? Was that what Warrender meant? A wild flood of feeling, resentment, terror, desire for revenge, swept through Geoff's mind. Warrender, to whom already he owed so much; Warrender, who had taken his mother from him, and his home, and everything he cared for in the world, — Warrender now wanted to kill him! If mamma knew! Mamma had not ceased to care for her boy. Even now that the babies had come she still loved Geoff, — and if she knew!

The boy jumped up from his couch. He was pale and trembling, and the cut on his forehead showed doubly from the total absence of color in his little gray face; but he got himself a great draught of water, and, restored by that and by the rush of rage that swelled all his veins, he flew down-stairs, past Joseph in the hall, who gave an outcry of astonishment, to where the gardener's boy was still holding his pony outside. Geoff, scarcely able to stand, what with the shock and what with the emotion, clambered up upon the pony, and turned its head homewards. The pony was

well pleased to find himself in that way, and obeyed with enthusiasm his little master's impulse. The small steed and rider flew along the road to Markland. Geoff had no cap; he was dusty, as if he had been for days on the road; and as he flew by, the cottagers came out to the doors to look, and said to each other that the little lord must be mad, that he would have an accident like his father. He went on thus, with scarcely a pause till he reached the gates of Markland, wrath and pain carrying his mind at even a swifter rate than the pony carried his little person, eager for sympathy and for revenge.

Something stayed this headlong race all at once. It was when he came within sight of the avenue, which was so bare, which had no trees except at distant intervals. There he saw a speck upon the way, a slowly moving figure, which he recognized at once. It was his mother, coming down, as was her wont, to meet — whom? Her husband. Geoff's hot heart, all blazing with childish rage, sank into a shivering calm at the sight of her. In a moment he turned from heat to cold, from headlong passion to the chill of thought and self-sacrifice. Mamma! She it was now who was "delicate," as he had been all his life. It might make her ill; it would make her miserable. What! she who had been everything to him, — was he now going to seize upon her as Theo had seized him, and shake her and hurt her, he, her own boy? The child drew up his unwilling pony with a sudden force which almost carried him over its head. No, he could not do that. He would not. He would rather be shaken, strangled, thrown down, anything in the world, rather than hurt mamma. His little heart swelled with a new spring of impassioned emotion. He would bear it for her sake; he would bear anything, he did not mind what, rather than do that. He would never, he cried to himself, with a rush of scalding tears to his eyes, hurt

her. He turned the pony's head round with a force of passion which that astonished animal could not resist, to give himself, after the wild rush of his flight homeward, a little time to think. And he thought, knitting his little brows, twitching his little face, his heart aching, his small body all strained with the effort. No! whatever he did, whatever he had to bear, he would not hurt mamma.

LI.

Warrender had a long conference with Dick Cavendish in the old library at the Warren. Mr. Wilberforce, who had been sent for, came at once, full of curiosity and excitement; and though Mr. Longstaffe could not be had, the experience of the two clergymen, who knew all about marriage registers and the proofs that were necessary, was of use in this curious family crisis. It was all very important both to Chatty and to the family in general, and Theo did his utmost to keep his attention to it: but his thoughts were elsewhere. He was glad to be released, when all was done that could be done by the little family commission. The result was a kind of compromise. No one had any moral doubt that Dick was right, but some higher sanction seemed to be necessary before he could be allowed to take Chatty away. The ladies had to be called in to soothe and subdue his impetuosity, to get him to consent to delay. Warrender scarcely waited to see how it was settled. The impatience within him was not to be controlled. His heart was at Markland, hot with anger and anxiety, while he was forced to remain here and talk of other things. Yes, to be sure, Chatty's good name, her happiness, — if she considered her happiness to be involved in that, — were important. It was important for Cavendish, too, if any one cared what was important for Cavendish: but good heavens, not so impor-

tant — could any one suppose so for a moment? — as what had happened, what might be happening, elsewhere. Old Joseph had stopped him as he went through the hall to tell him that the little lord had run off and got on his pony, and was gone home. He was gone home. It was a relief for one thing, for Theo had felt that it would be impossible for him to carry that little demon back with him in the dog-cart, as it would have been his duty to do. But in another — how could he tell what might be happening while he was kept there, amid maddening delays and hesitations, looking over Dick Cavendish's papers? What could Dick Cavendish's papers matter? A few days sooner or later, what could it matter to Dick Cavendish? Whereas to himself — That boy might be lying senseless on the road, for anything he knew; or, what was worse, he might have got home and told his story. And the sting was that he had a story to tell.

Warrender knew that he had done what he ought not to have done. He had treated the child with a violence which he knew to be unmanly. He had thrown him down, and stunned, and might have killed him. He did not deny to himself what he had done. He would not deny it to her, — and he fully expected that she would meet him with upbraidings, with anger. With anger! when it was he who was the injured person, — he, her husband, whose privacy was constantly disturbed and all his rights invaded by her son. He turned this over and over in his mind, adding to the accumulation of his wrongs, till they mounted to a height which was beyond bearing. The fire blazed higher and higher as he kept on throwing in fuel to the flames. It must come to some decision, he said to himself. It was contrary not only to his happiness, but to his dignity, his just position, to let it go on, to be tormented perpetually by this little Mordecai at the gate, this child who was made of more importance than he

was, who had to be thought of, and have his wishes consulted, and the supposed necessities of his delicate health made so much of. Geoff's generosity, the constant sacrifices of which he was conscious, were lost upon his step-father. He knew nothing of the restraint the child put on himself, or of the wistful pain with which Lady Markland looked on, divining more than she knew. All that was a sealed book to Theo. From his side of the question Geoff was an offense on every point. Why should he be called upon to endure that interloper always in sight, — never to feel master in his own house? To be sure, Markland was not his house, but Geoff's; but that was only a grievance the more, for he had not wished to live in Markland, while his own house stood ready for his own family, with plenty of room for his wife and children. There grew upon Warrender's mind a great resolution, or, rather, there started up in his thoughts, like the prophet's gourd, full grown, a determination, — that this unendurable condition of affairs should exist no longer. Why should he be bound to Geoff, in whose presence he felt he was not capable of doing himself justice, who turned him the wrong way invariably, and made him look like a hot-tempered fool, which he was not? No, he would not endure it longer. Frances must be brought to see that for the sake of her son her husband was not always to be sacrificed. It should not continue. The little girls must not grow up to see their father put in the second place, to think him an irritable tyrant. No, it must not continue, not for a day.

And there occurred to Theo, when he approached the gate of Markland, something like the same experience which had befallen Geoff. He saw going slowly along the bare avenue two figures, clinging closely together, — as he had seen them a hundred times, though never without jealousy, when he had no right to interfere. For a long time these

walks had been intermitted, and he had almost forgotten that one among the many irritations of the past. But now it all surged back, with an exasperation entirely out of proportion to the offense. For the offense was no more than this: that Lady Markland was walking slowly along, Geoff clinging with both hands to her arm, clasping it, with his head almost on her shoulder, with a sort of proprietorship which made the spectator frantic. He stopped the dog-cart and sprang down, flinging the reins to the groom outside of the gate. The sight brought his resolution, his rage, the fierce passion within him, to a climax. Yes, he had been anticipated; that was clear. The story of all that had passed had been poured into his wife's ear. She would meet him with reproaches, perhaps with tears, pointing to the cut on her son's forehead. There came into Theo's mind a maddening recollection that he himself had been once cut on the forehead for Geoff; but no one, not *she*, at least, would remember that now. She would meet him furious, like a tiger for her cub; or, worse, she would meet him magnanimous, forgiving him, telling him that she knew it must have been an accident, — whereas it was no accident. He would make no pretense; he would allow that he had done it, he would allow that he had meant to do it; he would make no further pretenses, and tolerate no pretenses from this day.

In his anger he was as swift and light as a deer. Their backs were turned towards him, and they were too much absorbed in their talk to hear his approach. He was close to them, on Lady Markland's other side, before they heard anything. The mother and son looked up simultaneously, and started as if they were but one being at the sight of him. She gave a faint cry, — "Theo!" — and Geoff unclasped her arm and slid from her in a moment, which, though it was what he wished, made the fire burn still higher in Warrender's heart.

"So," he said, with the harsh laugh of excited temper, "he has been telling you his story. I knew he would."

"He has been telling me no story, Theo," said Lady Markland. "Oh, yes; he has been telling me that Mr. Cavendish" —

"Confound Mr. Cavendish! I am speaking of your boy, Lady Markland. He has been telling you about the cut on his forehead."

She looked from the man to the child, growing pale. "He fell," she said, faltering. "But he says it does not hurt."

"The little liar!" cried Theo, in his excitement. "Why did n't you tell your mother the truth?"

"Warrender!" said little Geoff, in a tone which conveyed such a warning as Theo would not have taken from any man in the excited state of his mind. The child was red with sudden indignation, but still he held fast to his part.

"Geoff, run away home!" cried his mother, trembling. "Nurse will bathe it for you — and papa" — she had ventured to call her young husband by this name since the birth of the babies — "will give me his arm."

"I tell you he is a little liar," said Theo again. "He did not fall. I threw him down. He thrust himself into the midst of my family affairs, a meddling little fool, and I caught hold of him and threw him out of the way. It is best that you should know the truth."

They stood all three in the middle of the bare road, the afternoon sun throwing its level light into their eyes, — looking at each other, confronting each other, and standing apart.

"Theo," said Lady Markland, "I am sure you did not mean to hurt him. It was — an accident, after all. And Geoff, I am sure, never meant to interfere. But, indeed, you must not use such words of my boy."

"What words would you like me to use? He is the pest of my existence. I want you to understand this once for

all. I cannot go on in this way, met at every turn by a rival, an antagonist. Yes, he is my rival in your heart, he is my opponent in everything. I cannot turn round at my own table, in my own house, without his little grinning face" — Here Theo stopped, with a laugh still wilder than his words. The startled faces of the mother and son, the glance they gave at each other like a mutual consultation, the glow of indignation that overcame Lady Markland's paleness, were all apparent to him in a flash of meaning. "Oh, I know what you will say!" he cried. "It is not my house; it is Geoff's. A woman has no right to subject her husband to such a humiliation. Get your things together, Frances, and come with me to my own house. I am in a false position here. I will bear it no longer. Let him have what is his right. I am resolved that he and I shall not sleep again under the same roof."

"Theo, you cannot mean what you say. You can't be so — If Geoff has done anything wrong, he will beg your pardon. Oh, what is it, what is it?" She did not ask her son for his version of the story with her lips, but she did with her eyes, which exasperated Theo more and more.

"It does not matter what it is," he said. "It is not any temporary business, to be got over with an apology. It is just this, that you won't face what is inevitable. But it is inevitable. You must choose between him and me."

Geoff had been overwhelmed by this sudden storm. He was so young to play the hero's part. He was not above crying when such a tempest burst upon him, and he had hard ado to keep back his tears. But when he met his mother's anguished, imploring look, Geoff felt in his little forlorn heart a courage which was more than man. "Warrender," he said, biting his lips to keep them from quivering, — "Warrender, I say! As soon as the holidays are over, I —

I'll go to school. I'll — be out of the way."

"Oh, Geoff!" Lady Markland said, with a heart-rending cry.

"It's — it's right enough, mamma; it's — quite right. I'm too old. I'm too — Warrender, I'll be going back to school in about six weeks." Alas, the holidays were just begun. "Won't that do?" cried little Geoff, with horrible twitchings of his face, intended to keep back the tears.

His mother went up to him, and kissed him passionately, and put him away with her hand. "Go," she said. "Geoff, go, and wait for me in your room. We must talk — alone; we must talk alone. Go. Go."

Geoff would have given much to throw himself into her arms, to support and to be supported by her: but the child was moved beyond himself. He obeyed her without a word, turning his back upon the combat, though he would fain have stood by her in it. Warrender had taken no part in this; he had made no response to Geoff's appeal. He was walking up and down, with all the signs of impatience, pale with passion and opposition. He paused, however, as the boy went away, a solitary, forlorn little figure stealing along the avenue in silence, too dutiful even to look back. Lady Markland stood, too, and looked after him, with a pang of compunction, of compassion, of heart-yearning, which it would be impossible to put into words. Her boy! who had been her chief, almost only companion for years; who was more dear — was he more dear? — than any one; who was her very own, all her own, with no feeling in his mind or experience in his little consciousness that was not all hers, — and this man bade her send him away, separate from her child: this — man. It is not safe for a union when one of the parties thinks of the other as that man. All at once a light had flashed up in Lady Markland's heart. She had been made

very soft, very submissive, by her marriage. She had married a young man, younger than herself. She had seemed to herself ever since to be asking pardon of him and of the world for doing so. But now his violence had called her back to herself. She had not been too soft or submissive in the old days. She had been a woman with a marked character, not always yielding. The temporary seemed suddenly to disappear out of her life, and the original came back. She stood for a moment looking after her child, and then, being feeble of body, though waking up to such force of mind, she went to a bench which stood on the edge of the road, and sat down there. "If this is as you say, it is better that we should understand each other," she said.

Her tone had changed. From the anxiety to soften and smooth everything, the constant strain of deprecation and apology which had become habitual to her, she had suddenly emerged into a composure which was ominous, which was almost tragic. Even the act of sitting down, which was due to her weakness, made her appear as if taking a high position, assuming an almost judicial place. She did not intend it so, but this was the effect it produced upon Warrender, stinging him more deeply still. He felt that he was judged, that his wife had thrown off the yoke which he had made so heavy, and that his chance of bringing her back to her subjection, and of forcing her into the new and sudden decision which he called for, was small. This conviction increased his fury, but it also made him restrain the outward signs of it. He went after her, and stood in front of the bench of which she had made a sort of judicial throne.

"You are right in that," he said. "Things have gone too far to return to their old level. I must have my house to myself, and for that reason it must be my own. I wish you to come with

me to the Warren, — the children and you."

"Your mother and your sisters are there," she said, fixing upon him a steady look.

"What does that matter? There is room, I hope, at all times for the master of the house."

"You ask me," she said, "to turn all my life upside down, to change my habits and arrangements, at a moment's notice. But you have not told me why. Have you told me? You have said that my little boy of twelve has offended you, and that you knocked him down. Is that why I must change my house, and all my life?"

The slow steadiness of her tone made him frantic; that, more than the deliberate way in which she was putting him in the wrong.

"I have told you," he cried, "that I am in a false position altogether, and that I will not bear it any longer! You ought to see that I am in a false position. As for your little boy — of twelve" —

"What of him?" she asked, growing very pale, and rising again from her seat.

"Only this one thing, Frances: that you can't serve God and mammon, you know; you can't keep both. You must choose between him and me."

"Choose?" She sat down again suddenly, as if her strength had failed her. "Choose! between Geoff, my little Geoff — my boy — my baby — Geoff" —

There was a kind of ridicule in her voice, a ridicule which was tragic, which was full of passion, which sounded like a scoff at something preposterous, as well as an indignant protest.

"Your scorn does not make it different. Yes, Geoff — who is all that: and me, — between him and me."

For a moment they gazed at each other, having arrived at that decisive point, in a duel of this kind, when nei-

ther antagonist can find a word more to say. Lady Markland was very pale. She had been brought in a moment from her ease and quiet, when she expected no harm, to what might be the most momentous decision. She was still feeble, her nerves strained and weak from the long tension at which they had been held. She had clasped her hands together, and the fingers quivered. Her eyes seemed to grow larger and more luminous as she looked at him. "Theo," she said, with a long breath. "Theo! do you know — what you are saying? Do you mean — all that — all that?"

He thought he was going to get an easy, an unlooked-for victory; he congratulated himself with a swift flash of premature triumph that he had pushed matters to a crisis, that he had been so firm. "Yes," he cried, "I mean it all. We can't go on longer as we are. You must choose between him and me."

She kept looking at him, still without relaxing from that fixed gaze. "Do you know what you are asking?" she said again. "That I should give up my child, — my first-born child, my little delicate boy, who has never been parted from me. Was it ever heard of that a mother was asked to give up her child?"

"They have done it," he said, — "you must know that, — when a higher claim came in."

"Is there any higher claim? Every other is at our own choice, but this is nature. God made it. It cannot change. There may be other — other" — she faltered, her voice grew choked, — "but only one mother," she said.

"Other — other?" he cried; "what? To me there has been but one, as you know. I have put all my choices in one. God made it? Has not God made you and me one? — whom God has joined together" —

"Oh, Theo." She got up and came towards him, holding out her hands. "One, to bear each other's burdens, to help each other; not to go against na-

ture, to abandon what is the first of duties. Theo! oh, help me; do not make it impossible, do not rend me in two! What can I say to you? Theo!" She tottered in her weakness; her limbs were not strong enough to support her. But Warrender made no forward step. He did not take the hands she held out to him. He had to be firm. It was now or never, he said to himself.

"If we are ever to live happily together the sacrifice must be made. I don't want to hurt you, Frances. If I seem harsh, it is for our good, the good of both of us. Make up your mind. Can any one doubt what is your first duty? It is to me. It is I that must settle what our life is to be. It is you who must yield and obey. Are you not my wife? Spare yourself further pain—and me," he went on, with all the absolute and cruel sincerity of youth. He made it up in his own mind that this was the right thing to do, and steeled himself to resist the appeal of her weakness, to see her flutter back to the hard bench, and drop down there, unsupported, unaided. It was for the best, it was for her good, to put things on a right footing at once and for all ways. After this, never a harsh word, never an opposition, more.

Her husband thus having her to himself, standing before her, magisterial, coldly setting down what her duty was, enforcing obedience,—he who little more than a year ago — She wavered back to her bare seat alone, and sat there looking up at him till the peroration came to an end. In these few minutes many things flew through Lady Markland's thoughts,—unspeakable offense, revolt against this unlovely duty presented to her, a sudden fierce indignation against him who had thus thrust himself into her life and claimed to command it. At that moment, after all the agitation he had made her suffer, and before the sacrifice he thus demanded of her, she could scarcely believe that she too had

loved him, that she had been happy in his love. It seemed to her that he had forced himself upon her, taken advantage of her loneliness, compelled her to put herself in his power. It had been all adoration, boundless devotion, help, and service. And now it was command. Oh, had he but said this before! Had he bidden her then choose between her child and him, before — And as she looked at him a wild ridicule added itself to those other thoughts. To see him standing making his speech, thinking he could coerce a woman like herself, thinking in his youthfulness that he could sway any woman's heart like that, and cut off the ties that vexed him, and settle everything for the good of both! Heaven! to see him lifting up his authoritative head, making his decision, expecting her to obey! Spare yourself—and me! That she should refuse did not enter into his mind. She might struggle for a time, but to what use? Spare yourself—and me! She could not help a faint smile, painful enough, bitter enough, curving her lips.

"You speak at your ease," she cried, when his voice stopped. "It is easy to make up one's mind for another. What if I should refuse—to obey, as you say? A wife's obedience, since you appeal to that, is not like a servant's obedience nor a child's. It must be within reason and within nature. Suppose that I should refuse?"

He had grown cool and calm in the force of his authority. The crimson flashed to his face and the fire to his eye at her words.

"Refuse—and I have my alternative," he cried. "I will never enter your house again nor interfere in your concerns more."

Again they contemplated each other in a deadly pause, like antagonists before they close for the last struggle. Then Lady Markland spoke:—

"Theo, I have done all that a woman could do to please you and satisfy you,

—all, and more than all. I will not desert my little boy.”

“You prefer Geoff to me?”

“There is no preferring; it is altogether different. I will not give up my child.”

“Then you give up your husband?”

They looked at each other again,—she deadly pale, he crimson with passion, both quivering with the strain of this struggle; her eyes mutely refusing to yield, accepting the alternative, though she said no more. And not another word was said. He turned on his heel, and walked back down the avenue, with quick, swinging steps, without ever turning his head. She watched him till he was out of sight, till he was out of hearing, till the gate swung behind him, and he was gone. She did not know how she was to get back to the house, over that long stretch of road, without any one to help her, and thought with a sickening and failing of her heart of the long way. But in this great, sudden, unlooked-for revolution of her life she felt no weakness nor failing. The revulsion was all the greater after the self-restraint. For the first time after so long an interval she was again herself.

LII.

That night Lady Markland did not close her eyes. The strength of resistance, of indignation, of self-assertion, failed her, as was inevitable, in the long and slow hours, during which she looked out, at first with a certainty, then with a hope, that Theo would come back. He must come back, she said to herself, even if all were over, which seemed impossible, impossible!—all in an hour or two, in one afternoon, when she thought no evil—still the most prosaic of considerations, the least important, his clothes, if nothing more, must bring him back. She went on saying this to herself, till from a half scorn which was in it at

first it came to a kind of despair. He must come back, at all events, for his clothes! She could scarcely bear Geoff during the afternoon, though it was for him all this misery was. She never could, nor would, give up her child, but his society was intolerable to her just then; and she felt that if Theo came and found them together he might think—he would have a certain right to think—It was a relief to her when at last Geoff went to bed, all his questions silenced, chilled, terrified, yet still heroically restraining himself, and making up his mind that he was to be sent away. After this she felt a kind of relief, a freedom in being left to herself, in wandering about the rooms and looking out in succession at every window that commanded the avenue. When the hour came to shut up the house she gave the butler an elaborate explanation: how Mr. Warrender had been obliged to return to the Warren about some business; how it was possible that he might not come back that night; in fact, she did not expect him that night; but still he might return. It was not necessary that any one should sit up,—oh, no, not necessary at all. She should hear him if he came, or he could let himself in. “But I really do not expect him to-night. He has—business,” she said, with a smile, which the butler thought not at all like my lady. She was not given to explanations in an ordinary way. She was very kind and considerate; but she was always a great lady, and not expansive to her servants. She smiled in a strange, conciliatory way, as if begging him to believe her, and explained, to make it all right. The butler was not deceived. When was any butler ever deceived by such pretenses? He knew better,—he knew that something had happened. He told the company down-stairs that he made no doubt there had been a row, and most likely about Master Geoff, and that they might make up their minds to see rare changes. They were all mak-

ing their comments upon this in the servants' hall, while Lady Markland, standing at the window, looked out with a sort of desperation, shaping the figure of Theo a hundred times in the distance, scarcely able to restrain the impulse to go out and look for him; saying to herself, no longer scornfully, but with the profoundest tragic gravity, that he must come back, if only for his clothes! It was a dim summer night, the sky veiled with clouds, and after midnight fitfully lit by the gleam of a waning moon. She went from window to window noiselessly, thinking that now one, now another, had the most perfect command of the avenue; hearing a hundred sounds of footsteps, even of distant wheels and horses' hoofs, which seemed to beat upon the ground far off, and never came any nearer. Then when the dawn began to be blue in the sky, she threw herself upon her bed and hid her face, knowing that all was over, and that he would come back no more.

Scarcely less was the consternation in the Warren when Theo, pale and silent, wrapped in silence as in a cloak, making no reply to the questions asked, ordering his old room to be made ready without any explanations, came back to the already excited house. Dick and Chatty and all their affairs were forgotten in the extraordinary new event. "Oh, Theo, what has happened," Mrs. Warrender cried, "what has happened? Are you not going home?"

"This is my home, I suppose," he said, "unless you have any objections," which closed her mouth. She thought there must have been a quarrel, and that Lady Markland had resented Theo's treatment of Geoff, which his mother immediately began to justify to herself; saying that of course he did not mean to hurt the child, but that a person put in charge of the children of another, in any case, must have some power of correcting them when they want correction:—with great wonder and indigna-

tion at his wife, yet an obstinate counter-question in her mind if any one had corrected Theo so, when he was a boy—She did all she could to urge him to return, sitting up till very late, keeping the groom awake for possible orders. "Frances will be very anxious," she said to her son. "She has no reason to be anxious; she knows where I am." "Oh, Theo, don't let it come to a quarrel," Mrs. Warrender urged imploringly, with tears in her eyes. Her attitude put him in mind of his wife's attitude as she stood holding out her hands, and was intolerable to him. "Good-night, mother. I am going to bed," he said. Mrs. Warrender was as restless as Lady Markland. She had come and listened to his breathing outside his door, and seen that his light was out, and that he had actually gone to bed, as he said, before she would allow herself to be convinced. It was a quarrel, then; and what was to come of it,—what was to come of it? Lady Markland was very yielding and gentle, but Theo! Theo was not yielding. Mrs. Warrender, too, lay down when it was nearly morning, as miserable as could be.

And yet none of them, not even the chief actors, who were both at the pitch of desperation, really believed that what this meant was a breach which should last for years. Even they did not believe it in their hearts. That things should not all come right was incredible. But as a matter of fact they did not come right. Lady Markland was not by nature the yielding and anxious woman which for this year of troubled wedlock she had appeared; and everybody knew that Theo was neither persuadable nor reasonable, but had the hottest temper, the most rigid will, of his own, and that ingenuity in finding himself in the right which gives a fatal character to every quarrel. Lady Markland was willing to make any concession but the one which he required, the abandonment of Geoff. But he would make no concession; he

stood upon his rights. With all the fervor and absolutism of inexperience he stood fast. No! nothing less than everything, nothing but entire submission, nothing but obedience. Alarmed and anxious friends gathered to the fray, as was inevitable, and everything was made worse. The result was that within a few weeks Theo Warrender had gone off with a burning sense of injury and wrong, to travel he did not much care where, to forget himself he did not much care how; and Lady Markland, feeling as if she had awakened suddenly from a strange dream, a dream full of fever and unrest, of fugitive happiness but lasting trouble, came to herself all alone, with the two little babies, in a strange solitude which was no longer natural, and with Geoff. She had chosen, who could say wrongly?—and yet in a way which set wrong all the circumstances of her life.

This was how for the moment her second venture came to an end. Theo went forth upon the world for that wander-year in which so much of the superfluous vigor of life is often expended, which it would have been so well for everybody if he had taken before, and stormed about the world for a time, no

one knowing what volcanoes were exploding in his soul. How much he gathered of better wisdom it is not within the limits of this history to say.

The happy ones were Dick and Chatty, who began their life together as if there had been no cloud upon it. He had fully lived out his wander-year, and had paid dearly for the follies, which had been done with no evil meaning on his part, but in all honor and good intention, bitterly foolish though they were. And perhaps he never was very wise, nor rose above the possibility of being taken in, which is a peculiarity of many generous spirits. But why should we say they were the happy ones? The really happy ones were Minnie and her Eustace, who never felt themselves to be in the wrong, or were anything less than the regulators of everybody's life and manners wherever they went. It was Mrs. Eustace Thynne's conviction to the last that all the misfortunes which temporarily befell her sister were owing to the fact that she herself was not on the spot to regulate affairs; and that Theo, if he had taken her advice, would never have placed himself in the way of the trouble which had overwhelmed his life.

M. O. W. Oliphant.

PRISONERS.

EVERYWHERE the sculptor hears
A voice unheard by other ears;
It half commands and half entreats,
As this burden it repeats:
"Hasten, master! quickly come!
Countless ages, dark and dumb,
Frozen in this prison white,
Has my beauty longed for light.
Hasten! With thy chisel keen
Cut away my marble screen,
And before your gladdened eyes
See a perfect statue rise!"

So at times I strangely hear
 Messages distinctly near.
 "Tarry not, but set me free!"
 Whisper lips well known to me.
 "Silence deeper than the tomb,
 Darkness raven as the gloom
 Wrapping the decrees of Fate,
 Here surround me as I wait.
 Hasten, hasten to set free
 Thy perfect self that is to be!"

Paul Hermes.

A RHAPSODY OF CLOUDS.

"O ETHER divine!" cried Prometheus; but *he* was chained supine on the rock, and forced to see the sky. We who walk erect at will are apt to confine our attention to the things of earth. There are two landscapes, two firmaments, always visible to us; but it is as if, by some secret compact, the upper and finer one were reserved apart for birds and poets, or for the forlorn face that here and there turns upward in search of some better justice or fairer hope than has been found on earth. Now and then we find a person who has the habit of looking at the night skies, and mayhap knows the constellations, so that the stars are not accidental sparks to him any longer, but old friends, any one of whose faces would be missed if it were withdrawn. But who looks upward by day and sees the clouds?

There are ways of enticing people, or reminding ourselves, to appreciate this neglected side (the upper side) of landscape. It is no sin to improve upon Nature, or at least upon our physical endowments for apprehending her beauty. The *camera obscura* is one such contrivance. Fix a suitable lens in the front of any old box, with a dark curtain under which to thrust the head, and the "divine ether," with its cloud-cuckoo-town of shifting scenery, will

stoop to our infirmity, and mimic itself in little — but with all its glorious light and color — below our face. The Claude Lorraine glass is another simple instrument of magical effect. The great landscape that seemed too vast to look at, in its sweep of valley and woods and hills and sky, comes into the compass of the hand, with the lights and shades and hues all there, but mellowed and softened; it is beautiful as ever, but it all floats on the facet of a crystal; the big giant has eaten of Alice's cake in Wonderland, and becomes a heavenly child; the finite eye has captured the infinite distance by a pretty trick. The poet Gray, it is said, used always to carry a common lens in his pocket when he "walked abroad," in whose surface to see the landscape imaged; thus, we may suppose, to bring it nearer the compass of an elegy or an ode.

But this present screed was entered upon in order to recommend to all readers of *The Atlantic* and lovers of nature the use of still another bit of artifice for aiding the natural eye to see the supernatural beauties and wonders of sky-and-cloud scenery. I mean the ordinary smoked glasses of the optician's shop. They should not be colored glasses at all, but just sufficiently clouded with a colorless smoke-tint to

tone down the intensity of the brightest light. The test should be that one can gaze fixedly at a bright, sunlit white cloud floating in noonday blue, without trying the eye. I do not believe (though I am no optician) that the ordinary habitual use of such glasses is to be recommended, except where the eye imperatively demands protection. They are rather for special emergencies, such as a dusty wind-storm in the city, to keep the awning-posts and paving-blocks out of one's eyes; or on the snow slopes of a mountain, to blunt the intolerable glare; or in a railroad car, to fend off cinders blundering in through an open window; and especially for this æsthetic use of which I speak. One feels, on using them for the first time, that he never before has properly seen a cloud; for the reason that never before has he been able to look steadily right into the face and eyes of a brilliant noonday sky.

In this way, with the shield of the soft-toned glasses before the eyes, one no longer gives a general look at the heavens now and then, with a hasty glance, as to know whether it is necessary to take an umbrella; but he seats himself before it, as before the surf, or before a play at the theatre, to watch deliberately what goes on. Nor does he any longer look at an individual cloud that is pointed out for some grotesque shape, or some remarkable color; but he sees the whole field, the complex groupings of forms and tints, the marchings and countermarchings of the sky battalions. One might as well suppose he knew the wonders of forest scenery when he had only looked at single trees, as to imagine he had seen the clouds when he had only glanced hastily at an occasional cloud. There are wonderful mountains among them, with sheer precipices, and shadowy caves, and Alpine erags; dark towers, such as Childe Roland blew his blast before; minarets and domes, with mysterious arabesque of Oriental tracery; serene ocean shores,

where the gray sand glimmers through shoaling blue, and the round-breasted galleons sail smoothly over.

It is great to sit in a lawn-chair, of a summer Sunday afternoon, and gaze undazzled into the upper sky. A light breeze taps the pear-tree leaves softly, as a mother might pat together the palms of her child. The organ snores sleepily in the distant church; even the choir sounds musical, heard faintly and occasionally, as if it were a far-off memory of better music. The blue of the zenith is intense with light that would be unbearable to the unshielded eye, and as the Cleopatra's barges of slow clouds sail softly across, with their round, bellying sails of snow and pearl, it only makes the azure more "deeply and darkly" blue. By and by the color, or the very depth and boundlessness of it, seems to inundate one's brain, as the blue, deep sea-tide lifts through a coral reef, and all the little ocean-creatures stretch out their delicate hands and feed confidingly in the lucid clearness. So do delicate brain-fancies float and feed tranquilly in this inflooding tide of the blue heavens.

Nor is all this without its possibility of solid scientific usefulness, O dear specialist, that inclinest to flout such skyey contemplations! *Why* do those clouds float there so buoyantly; and what makes the cirrus take on those feathery forms? Do not tell me it is the wind, unless I am to believe there be winds celestial, very different from winds terrestrial. Those filmy tufts, those lightest dabs, drawn out in wavy brush-lines, as if with a pencil dipped in sublimated wool, or in the quintessence of dissolved cobweb,—is it by electricity, or magnetism? Or have some of those puffy-cheeked cherubs, seen so commonly tilting about the mediæval skies by the old masters, but not any more seen with the naked eye,—have some of these bodiless baby-heads blown them at one another, for a game?

Even thou, O dear Gradgrinding, canst find thine account in this sky-gazing! It is even of "use," "practically." For there is no better barometer, or prophet of the weather, than such a film of cloud as one sees yonder. If it grows and grows, as we watch it (not that we can see it grow,—cloud prophets are too subtle for that; but if we see from moment to moment that it *has* grown), then we may know it will pretty surely rain. While if it fade and fade, and suddenly we find ourselves only remembering what was,—for it is not any more,—then we may pretty safely leave the umbrella at home.

Some days the outlines of the clouds are all making faces at each other: merry faces, if one feels in that mood, and therefore unconsciously compels the eye to that selection of forms; solemn faces, if that be the masterful feeling. Why should the profiles generally be looking from right to left? Or is that only an idiosyncrasy of my own? With me, it is so on wall-paper, it is so in the cloud-tapestry of the sky; my mind, if for the moment idle, perpetually sees faces, nearly always profiles, and nearly always looking to the left. Is it because one sketches a profile on paper with the right hand, and so with the projecting points toward the left, away from the hand, which otherwise would hide them? Some poet may say, if he chooses to, that it is with *all* the faces and aspects of this universe as with those of the clouds,—that all look smiling and benevolent to us, or grim and forbidding, according to our own voluntary state of heart; but I will not say it, for I am *not* perfectly sure it is true. The poet will probably say it if he only hopes it is true.

When presently we are able to sail the air in the coming balloon, it will be pleasant to make afternoon excursions among the summer clouds. We shall *rendezvous* here and there in their recesses. "Come!" one will say to his

friend; "let us talk it over on the rosy southwest corner of that mother-of-pearl mountain in the sky." Or we shall bid John unpack the luncheon basket in the shade of yonder floating shelf of foamy ivory; or we shall agree to meet, at half past two, just under the billowy chin of what seems an aerial Martha Washington.

How can so soft and fluffy a texture, an airy pile of birds' breasts and gossamer, hold so firm an outline against the blue, and catch such a splendor of intense light? As it comes floating and toppling across the sky, one would like to shoot a feather bed up through it, and let the azure through the soft hole. Or one would like to see an angel out of Paradise Lost, or, better, out of Dante's Paradiso, push the yielding curtains of it aside, and for an awed and heart-beating moment look earnestly, half smiling, down upon the earth.

It is a dead enough world, if people merely glance at it with the rambling, unsteady eye of a preoccupied mind. Water, for example,—what is it but drinkable fluid, or oxygen and hydrogen, to the average mortal? The "primrose by the river's brim" and the river by its own brim are equally stale, flat, and unprofitable. But let a man look *close*.—say, at the tense muscle of the running stream, or the bubble-shadows on the sands in the eddy, each with a yellow star in its centre: then the water is a living wonder. And these clouds—an every-day affair, no doubt, a "useful trouble," to most apprehensions; but if we look *close* we cannot but take in the unimagined beauty of them. Changeful as the sea, over which they have sailed so many leagues that they have taken on a certain mimicry of the intricate forms of ocean-waves, they are without the quick, criss-cross fret and restlessness of the sea; for the clouds are nearly always calm: over its "restlessness," their "rest." Yet they are never still; the gossamer tracery, if you watch it, is

all alive, as if the films and veins of agate should come to life, and begin to weave and unweave their interchanging fibres.

There is another odd and interesting effect of the dark glasses. When one takes them off, after a prolonged gaze through them, the whole world gains suddenly a new splendor. It is like a *sforzando* chord in a symphony of Rubinstein's. Or it is like a sudden bracing up of the spirit when one concludes to fling off a dusky mood, and enters the sunshine of some hearty action.

It is not often that we can watch, near by, the rapid formation of cloud; but it once happened to me, in climbing among the "American Alps," — the Sierra Nevada, — to find myself on a crag precisely underneath the line of low cloud formation. Leaning back to rest against the rock, and looking upward, I saw the mountain drapery weaving itself — out of nothing, as it appeared: blue air on one side of the line; dark slaty films (nearest it), then shreds, then masses of flying cloud, on the other. Clear across the sky extended the distinct edge of this swift and incessant weaving. It was like nothing but a great shadowy banner streaming out in the gale from an invisible cord strained tight across the sky. It was the work of the Earth Spirit in Faust: —

"At the roaring loom of Time I ply,
And weave for God the garment thou seest him
by."

Sometimes, with the eyes shielded by their smoke-tint armor against the blinding splendor of the summer blue contrasting with its dark cloud scenery, we may attend a thunder-storm symphony in the air. Solemnly the curtain begins to rise; the wind carries it, for there is a wild wind far up in the heavens, though as yet all is still below. There is a deep hush upon us all, — the trees, and birds, and the rest of us in the audience; for we are full of expectancy.

It grows insensibly darker and darker in "the hall of the firmament." There are rolls of distant thunder, — it is the orchestra, and the instruments are being tuned; you hear the contra-basses trying a chromatic passage in hesitating touches. There is some trilogy of Wagner's toward; for the stage is preparing, and the scenes are slowly shifting, — lofty walls of cloud that move silently to one side and the other; but no celestial actors emerge, and the azure floor remains empty. Or possibly they are there, but invisible; as most of the orchestral harmonies are still inaudible,

"Whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close us in," —

all but those louder and bolder double-basses, and the rolling and rattling *crescendo* of the drums. By and by a flash of keen lightning blazes out, like the crash of brazen cymbals threaded with the shrilling piccolo.

At such times you may occasionally catch a strange effect. You are looking through a deep cleft in the black clouds, cut down across the sky, at the brilliant blue between. Suddenly a lightning flash completely reverses, for just an instant, the light and shade; the gloomy cloud-walls gleam out intensely luminous, while the towering shaft of intervening sky is dark by contrast, and so starts forward tangibly from the distance, like a momentary incarnation of some black *genie* of the Arabian Nights.

On some more tranquil August afternoon, when the sky-dome is lifted to its serenest height, and only pearly cirrus, so far up as almost to be motionless, bars it from being infinite, we may recline in our couch-chair and gaze upward so long and steadily that we drowse a little. Or, if still awake, we seem to lose ourselves in space. It is as if there were a second sort of sleep possible to us; not the withdrawal of the consciousness back into the inner brain, as in night slumber, but the expansion or floating out of the consciousness into

the deeps of outer existence. Is it any wonder if sometimes, then, the methodical reason gives way to flitting fancies, and, while the clouds flow slowly and smoothly across the upper world, our reveries run into rhythm, and such things get themselves written as this with which we close?

CLOUD TRACERY.

What wind from what celestial wood hath sown
Such delicate seed as springs in air, and turns

The blue heaven-garden to a bed of ferns
In feathery cloud? They are not tossed, or blown

To such wild shapes, but motionless they ride,
Like a celestial frost-work on the pane
Of our sky-window, where the breath has lain
Of the pure cold upon the thither side.

They are but pencil touches, soft and light,
Traced faintly under some magnetic spell
By an entranced spirit, that would write

Hints of heaven-language ere the soul's release, —
Dim outlines of the syllables that tell
Of words like faith, and confidence, and peace.

A HALF-SCORE NEW NOVELISTS.

THERE is little doubt that the success of a very small group of American novelists of the day is having its legitimate outcome in an access of novel-writing, and that our descendants will devote a chapter in their literary histories to the rise of the American school of fiction as surely as we now group the dissimilar poets who had their day in the middle of this century. It is worth while, therefore, to make an occasional survey of current novels that shall exclude the books of those writers who have won their spurs. We still have plenty of stories of the old conventional type, but we also have books that represent a more or less conscious departure from ancient models, — that have, we will say, a literary as well as a fictitious being; and it is these novels and romances which interest us most, whether they are better or worse than the books which we used to read.

I.

Mr. Arlo Bates may object to being called a new novelist, since twice before, at least, he has appeared with a book; but his recent novel, *A Wheel of Fire*,¹ is a good starting point for his reputa-

¹ *A Wheel of Fire*. By ARLO BATES. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1885.

tion. When Lear returns slowly to sane consciousness, under the gentle restorative of Cordelia's presence, the distance between him with the overpowering sense of misery and her whose beautiful love he recognizes is the distance between hell and heaven.

"You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave:
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead."

In Mr. Bates's novel the heroine is bound upon the wheel of fire, but it is the more terrible wheel of the anticipation of madness, culminating in the fatal attack. Miss Wainwright and her brother are the children of a mother who was incurably insane. At the opening of the story, the brother, escaping from mild confinement at a retreat, makes his way back to the homestead where his sister is living, is found by her in an exhausted condition outside of the house, is brought within, and lies for weeks in a state of fever, with outbreaks of delirium. He is under the constant care of a young physician from the retreat, but finally dies by his own hand in an unguarded moment.

Meanwhile Miss Wainwright's cousin, Miss Elsie Dimmont, is visiting her, and a young lawyer, Sherlock Lincoln, who

has partial charge of the Wainwright property, makes a fourth in the *partie carrée* of the novel. There are two or three subordinate characters, who are well distinguished, including among the number an admirably individualized dog, but the action of the story is carried forward by the four. These early divide into their natural pairings: the somewhat coarse-fibred but resolute doctor with the self-willed and flirting cousin, and the fine-tempered, chivalric lawyer with the heroine of unkind fate. From first to last the reader is never allowed to lose sight of the theme of the novel. The chapter headings, ingeniously taken like the title from Shakespeare, contain hints of the tragic course of events, and the absence of any incidents or episodes to withdraw the mind from the central action intensifies the feeling with which the reader moves through the tale, hardly daring to believe in the final escape of the heroine, yet occasionally buoyed with hope that the worst may not prove true.

We wish to say emphatically that in point of construction *A Wheel of Fire* is an uncommon piece of work. The men and women in it are real, without relying for their reality upon an indefinite number of minute touches; they are clearly conceived in the author's mind, and set before the reader with strong lines. The incidents are simple and unstrained. The few slight conventional scenes, like the breaking of the old glass, are not made to carry too much. The conversations, barring an occasional feeble smartness, are natural and bear the narrative along; and the main thread of the story, that is, the development of the heroine's tendency to insanity, is skillfully and powerfully led. The reliefs, through the flirtation of Elsie Dimmont and the doctor, and the characters of Hannah and Peter, are just enough to heighten the effect of the central image, and the reader is filled with the pity for the victim which the author himself seems to feel.

Why is it, then, that with all this fine workmanship before him a healthy-minded reader recoils from the book as from something false, not merely as from something painful? The turning point of the story is when Damaris Wainwright, who has wisely resolved within herself not to marry because of the taint of insanity in her blood, yields to the assaults made upon her resolution by her lover, and persuades herself that she may consult only her own intense longing for the consolation of love. Mr. Bates has not disguised the falsity of her position. "She abandoned," he says, "all attempt to justify her change of mind. That was done with; the matter was settled for once and all, and her elation was in no small degree due to the delightful sense of having reached a certainty. But woe to the woman who closes the court of conscience in a question, no matter how insignificant, pertaining to love. Practically there was no end to Damaris' struggle with self, although she had for the moment won a joyous tranquillity. To accept as a condition of happiness a consciousness that the temple of justice in the heart is barred is with sensitive and upright natures to assume an impossibility, and poor Damaris, dazzled and won for the moment by Fenton's smooth subtleties of speech, was never more pathetically pitiful than in this hour of insecure bliss."

While, however, the moment of yielding is the critical moment in the life of the heroine, and so the turning point in the story, there is no real struggle and no victory. The will of Damaris makes after all only a feeble resistance from the beginning; thenceforth it is swept along, and acquires such a momentum that the discovery of an outside confirmation of her own internal fear makes scarcely a perceptible difference in her intention. It is too late! she cries; she feels the destiny that awaits her, and simply moves unresistingly toward the catastrophe.

The objection which we make to the book as a piece of art is that the author, having set before us two human beings of educated conscience, fine sense of honor, and strong will, having given them eyes to see the fatal consequences of their act, permits them to be overcome by the very destiny they have feared, — a destiny which is involved not in some external force, but in physical conditions of their own nature. Now, great art does not make this mistake. Lear goes mad; his madness lay always coiled in his self-willed passion, ready to spring out on occasion, but Shakespeare gave him occasion enough. It was the blow struck at his pride by outrageous daughters that let loose the demon, and it was the power of love in Cordelia that tamed the wild beast and dispossessed the old man of his devil. Shakespeare would never have let physical weakness so surmount spiritual sense, and crowned necessity instead of free will. It may be said that Mr. Bates's conception is that of the Greeks; but the Greek Necessity was a recognized divinity which was absolute and apart from man, — acting, indeed, through him, but permitting no moral choice in the man himself.

No; it is all wrong. It might have been a commonplace story which Mr. Bates would have told, if he had gifted Damaris Wainwright with the persistent power of self-denial and restraint, and had made Sherlock Lincoln chivalrously regardful of the woman, despite his own loss, but that would have involved no degradation of love. This story does involve it, and the painful scene at the close is repulsive, not merely because we see a beautiful woman transformed into a maniac, but because of the underlying thought of the story, which tells us, Thus *must* it have been. We cry out against that "must." We refuse to accept a logic which is based solely on physical processes. And so we say that the fine workmanship of the story is

wasted work. Inevitable insanity forms no foundation for a work of art, for it is not the final word of nature. Reason, not unreason, lies at the core of life, and a picture of life which denies this is false.

II.

The realistic treatment in fiction is pretty sure to provoke some extremist on the romantic side to see what he can do with thaumaturgic methods. By putting his story into the mouth of a Jewish musician, the author of *As it was Written*¹ has gone far to set free the probabilities. Almost any flight of fancy becomes credible when the flyer is a musician, and a Jew to boot, for one instantly is able to take advantage of the supernatural element as a part of the ordinary furniture of the mind. So far, then, the author does well, and we begin to follow the Jewish musician into the world of improbability with a cheerful abandonment of the mere understanding, — the meanest faculty, as De Quincey contemptuously says, in the human mind. This musician, Ernest Neuman, while taking the air one May evening at the eastern extremity of Fifty-First Street in New York, hears Gounod's Ave Maria sung by a soprano voice somewhere in the neighborhood. Entranced by the beauty of the voice and the passion of the air, he suddenly is aware of the presence at his side of a pale lady, whose pallor is not that of ill health, but of a luminous white soul.

"I knew at once," he says, "by the sudden pain that pierced it, that my heart had been waiting for this lady all its life. I did not stop to reflect and determine. The words flew to my tongue, and were spoken as soon as thought. 'Oh, how beautiful, how beautiful!' I exclaimed, meaning her. 'Very beautiful,' I heard her voice, clear and soft, respond. 'It is almost a

¹ *As it was Written*. A Jewish Musician's Story. By SIDNEY LUSKA. New York: Cassell & Co. 1885.

pain, the feeling such intense beauty gives,' — meaning the scene before us."

The precision with which the Jewish musician explains his own remark is more than equaled by the precision which he uses in clearing Veronika Pathzuol of any perception of the force of his impassioned words. Nature, he remarks to the reader, had introduced them, and we may add that, as Veronika's uncle, Mr. Tikulski, was in attendance, Nature was guiltless of any offense against conventionality. The introduction is followed by an invitation to the lodgings of the pair. They are all musicians and all Jews, and now the reader perceives that anything may happen. Happen everything does. The two young people become almost instantly engaged, the love-making being a sort of musical rhapsody on the part of the lover, and the plans for the marriage and for wedded life are quickly formed. This part of the story is hurried over, because the narrator has something of more importance to tell. He is to explain how and why Ernest Neuman without knowing it killed Veronika Pathzuol, before they were married, and how he came to find out long afterward the whole course of events in two or three generations which had culminated in this involuntary act of his. The title of the story refers to the method of disclosure. The hero is beset by a musical theme which insists upon being written down; he writes the score at last with a sort of possessed fury, and discovers, when his task is completed, that his music has run into downright script, and that what he supposed to be one of the movements is nothing more nor less than a perfectly intelligible account of his very methodical madness.

We have not thought it necessary — perhaps it would not be fair — to put the reader in possession of the whole course of the story, as given in this book. It is enough to say that the author proposes to reveal, by a somewhat

unique device, the causes of what may be termed a hypnotic homicide. Ingenuity is at the bottom of everything, and in his admiration for this one piece of novelistic property which he has invented the author sacrifices everything else. He had in the scheme of a musician writing sense, when he thought he was writing musical nonsense, a device which a man of fantastic imagination, like Poe, for example, might have employed very dexterously, giving it a culminating place, and making all else really lead to it; his fault is in bungling over it and making his whole book such a thin tissue of improbabilities that the reader is never swayed by the story-teller's emotion, but is simply curious to see how the story will turn out. Neuman dwells at length upon his own emotions, and goes through his experiences with sufficient cloudiness of behavior to justify the notion that he is somewhat irresponsible; but there is a lack in the book of that deft joining of all the parts which leaves no opening for skepticism. One has a right, when surrendering himself to a confessedly supernatural treatment, to be protected against his own inherent incredulity, and this can be done only by a writer who has so mastered his theme that he has conceived a certain consistency of improbability. As it was Written reads to us like a story dashed off at white heat by a writer who was only eager to reach the ingenious device; everything having been invented for the sake of that.

III.

The writer of *As it was Written* laid the scenes of that novel in New York, but gained nothing by opposing the matter-of-fact city life to the ghostly drama enacted there. Mr. Brander Matthews, in his story *The Last Meeting*,¹ attempts a realistic picture of New York life, or rather of that section of city life which

¹ *The Last Meeting. A Story.* By BRANDER MATTHEWS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1885.

is represented by club men, for the sake of the setting which it gives to a single mysterious incident. When realism takes hold of club life, it is apt to make a very earthly piece of business of it, and Mr. Matthews's young men and his old men of thirty-five do not give one an intense longing to be voted into their club. There is nothing low or vulgar about them, but they are dreadfully uninteresting companions, with their heavy-witted talk and their mock-airiness of sentiment. They have the lightness of eighteenth-century comedy-folk, probably the most dreary set of people, except their nineteenth-century descendants, that ever cut pigeon wings.

It is one of this number, an artist of easy habits of despondency, who blunders through a quarrel with the girl whom he loves, and is last seen — that is, before he turns up again at the end of the story — sitting at a table in a friend's house, engaged upon a letter. His friend stoops to mend the fire, turns, and misses Fred Olyphant, whom he had just left sealing his letter. The room in which they are is a windowless room, which separates larger rooms at the front and back, — a common arrangement in deep city houses. There are three modes of egress, by doors leading into these larger rooms, and by a concealed door, opening through the book-shelves into the passage way which passes all three rooms. In order to make the situation perfectly clear, Mr. Matthews gives a rude ground plan. Olyphant could not have passed into the larger rooms without coming upon other members of the dining club who were there. Hence, the reader as well as the more stupid of the club is driven to the irresistible conclusion that he went out by the book-shelf door. His hat is gone, though his coat remains.

The real mystery is after all why he left the house and where he went, for all the clues which are followed fail to lead to him, — all but one, which con-

nects with his mysterious absence a certain Greek miscreant who had arrived from Europe the same day, and who was a bitter enemy of Olyphant. The reader has already been given a glimpse of the fellow dogging Olyphant in the earlier part of the story, and waits patiently for the dénouement. It comes finally, and accounts in somewhat melodramatic fashion for the disappearance and long obscurity of the artist.

Mr. Matthews has properly called his book a story. It is, in fact, what paradoxically may be called a long short story. It has all the properties of a short story except the dimension of length, and it is the length which destroys the element of wit and surprise so essential to the successful short story. By dwelling on the several critical passages in his story, Mr. Matthews gives his readers the fatal privilege of thinking about the crises, and they solve the difficulties without his assistance. Had he carried them swiftly from one point to another, he might have diverted their attention from the weak links in his chain, whereas now he invites their notice. Look closely, he seems to say, by his reiterated discussion of the mystery: do you see any flaw? And the reader looks closely, and says at once, Yes, I do. Whatever merit such a story possesses must lie not in its delineation of persons, — and these people are discriminated only by a few obvious marks, — but in the cleverness with which the reader is kept in suspense, the perplexity of the situation, the sense that one is face to face with a blank wall, when suddenly a chink of light shows a crevice, and a new turn lets one out of the confinement. Such stories are never left behind by any refinement of the novelist's arts; they are scarcely improved by greater delicacy of personal characterization; but they must, to justify themselves, leave behind in the reader's mind the satisfaction of a secret well kept and finally well disclosed. Invention of this

sort is well worth the study of a bright story-teller, and the excellence of our short stories indicates that the art is a latent possibility. There seems to be no reason why fiction in America should not be strongly reinforced on this side. Certainly it would be a relief to many readers if they could again get stories in place of attenuated novels; but then they do not want wire-drawn stories.

IV.

The pleasure which the reader may derive from Mr. Sullivan's *Roses of Shadow*¹ is not the result of any novelty of plot. The story is a familiar one: she puts up with an inferior love; he tries to console himself with an unworthy substitute; the friend thinks himself wronged by the man whom he has befriended. Nor are the characters strongly individualized or drawn with skill. The one on whom the author has apparently spent most labor, Denise Gérard, a moderately equipped Becky Sharp, never renders the reader very uncomfortable; her intrigues and cool calculations are rather faintly impressed upon her character. Captain Bromfield is more cleverly sketched, and Bruni is somewhat distinct, though the scenes between him and his wife are scarcely as humorous in execution as in intention. The expression of determining character is even less successful. Why should Helena Bromfield ever have loved Maitland Ambrose? No reason in circumstance is given, and every reason in character and tendency is as much against the engagement as it is against the marriage. There are missing links in the narrative. Perhaps it was not necessary to account for Mr. Musgrave's acquaintance with Miss Gérard, though the author seems to hide the fact only for the sake of surprising the reader; but no explanation is given of Denise's relations with the family which justifies

the mildly melodramatic interruption of her interview with Marvin in the Granary burial-ground. Mr. Sullivan evidently relies upon his situations to give interest and piquancy to his novel. His people behave in no extraordinary fashion, and they talk simply enough; but the intriguing woman and the honorable lover meet under the walls of the *Athénæum*, and the fatal word is arrested by the sudden appearance of one of the library girls with a photograph; the adventuress — if so harsh an epithet can be applied to Denise — is swept over Niagara Falls, after a deliberate preparation for this ending of her career on the part of the author, which robs the scene of any power to thrill; Mr. Musgrave has an attack of apoplexy at a most opportune moment; and to crown all, Miss Bromfield is hid behind a curtain in the artist's studio while her lover and the artist discuss her. In this final situation Mr. Sullivan appears quite to have lost his wits, and to have been afraid of the tableau which he created.

Why is it, then, that we have spoken as if the reader would derive pleasure from this somewhat ineffective piece of art? The answer is simple enough. A piece of amateur acting or an amateur water-color may easily produce an agreeable sensation, despite the absence of professional skill and confidence. There is a quality of refinement about such work, the outcome of good breeding and good taste, which one accepts with satisfaction as a genuinely good thing. This is what makes Mr. Sullivan's timid novel with its faint strokes a book better worth reading than some which can more surely stand the test of criticism. The quality of refinement which pervades it is an agreeable quality. Even the club scenes take on a harmless impropriety; there is no swagger about them, and one feels that a man of the world does not necessarily smell of brandy. More than this, there is a disposition to depend for interest upon real sentiment. One is honestly

¹ *Roses of Shadow*. A Novel. By T. R. SULLIVAN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1885.

asked to care for a man who has been disappointed in love, and to be glad that a woman has escaped an unfortunate marriage. We do not know that any great thing is to be expected from this writer, but if he will develop from a decorative into a constructive artist and retain all his fineness of tone, one has reason to hope for fiction of a quiet sort that may be genuinely good and interesting.

V.

It is a delight to come upon naturalness in a story, and this is the charm which awaits the reader of *Within the Capes*.¹ Mr. Howard Pyle has made a good reputation as designer of illustrations which reproduce the costumes and manners of late colonial and early federal days. He has been more successful here than in reconstructing the early colonialism, but in his best work he has indicated a capital mastery of character, and a vivid rather than an idealizing imagination. All this appears in the story before us, which deals with the fortunes of a young sailor on the Delaware shore, who loves a Quaker maiden and wins her love, but is somewhat distrusted by her prudent father. The old Friend bids the sailor come back at the end of the year with seven hundred and fifty dollars, and he shall have his daughter. Off goes the young fellow, Tom Granger, a little in a dudgeon, and makes for Philadelphia as the nearest shipping port. It is in the days of the war with England, in the early spring of 1813, and the coast has just been under a blockade from British ships. The only maritime ventures of any promise are those undertaken by privateersmen, and Tom, under the influence of the Friends' principles, is averse from taking to this half-piratical life. He is finally persuaded, however, and ships as second mate on the *Nancy Hazlewood*. To his dismay, they are ordered to sea before the vessel

is at all ready, in order that they may take advantage of a lift in the blockade. They have a terrible time of it: the captain proves to be a madman, and the consequence is that the *Nancy* founders in a storm; a heavily laden boat puts off, and finally is swamped on a sandy island; the boat is a total wreck, and no lives are saved except those of our hero and the first mate, Jack Baldwin. Here for a year and a half the two men live in a dull, despairing way, until a terrible cyclone tears up the beach and uncovers some coin washed ashore from an old wreck. Their time is now occupied in hoarding the silver which fortune has sent them, and they are finally picked up by a vessel, which has become aware of their fate by means of an ingenious advertisement of their whereabouts which Tom had devised.

Tom gets back to his native village to learn that, having given him up for dead, the girl he left behind had at last been persuaded to marry a staid old Friend whom Tom had outrun in the earlier course of his love-chase. Tom meets this potential bridegroom, has high words with him, pounds him vigorously, but is saved from actually killing him in a frenzy. The next day, he is just bidding good-by to his family when the sheriff comes to arrest him for the murder of Isaac Naylor, his thrashed rival. Tom knows he has not killed him, but he goes to jail, and there manages his own case so far as to give his friend the lawyer the necessary lines upon which to work, demonstrative of his own innocence and the guilt of a man who would be better off for Naylor's death, and who really had dispatched him.

Here is incident enough, and, considering the very slight erotic element, one would not go far out of the way who should pronounce the book one for boys. It is, without doubt, a breezy book of adventure, acceptable to those who like a good story, tinged with the marvelous, well told, and brought to a triumphant

¹ *Within the Capes*. By HOWARD PYLE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1885.

conclusion. The art of the tale is no mean factor in its success. We question the entire reasonableness of making the old sailor who tells the story use the third person, interchanged with the first; there is a little too much affectation in this, but the reader is not especially annoyed, and perhaps the characterization of Tom Granger is helped by the half-withdrawal of the first person. Aside from this doubtful expedient, all the characters and scenes are managed with a rough spirit very proper to the supposed story-teller. No strength is wasted on mere refinements of form; the several incidents are sketched with a firm, bold hand, and are perfectly clear to the reader's mind. The scene of the boat wreck, for instance, and of Tom's scramble for life through the breakers is capitally described. Nor is the near remoteness of the whole story lost sight of. Without troubling himself about petty details, Mr. Pyle has contrived to keep the reader easily aware of the actual time of the story, and to invest the tale with a true atmosphere. It is such stories, hearty, objective, picturesque, full of life and vigor, which reveal to one who has been dwelling upon the refinements of modern fiction the capabilities of our American historical field. The war of 1812 is far enough away to be out of reach of our memory, and within that of our fathers and grandfathers, and thus affords a capital chance for the story-teller who has the art to catch at the salient features of life then, and the sympathy which enables him to enjoy a retrospective experience.

VI.

If the pleasure which one takes in Mr. Pyle's story is due to its naturalness, the disappointment which overtakes him when reading *A Mission Flower*¹ is owing to the artificial gloss

¹ *A Mission Flower*. An American Novel. By GEORGE H. PICARD. New York: White, Stokes & Allen. 1885.

of that novel. A more distinctly literary air pervades it, and we admit at once that the author has expended conscientious labor on it, has shown refinement in his use of words, and has carefully wrought at a conception which was by no means commonplace. In his contrast of persons and scenes he has, indeed, shown an excellent sense of what constitutes the foundation of a finished work of art. To place a young English girl, with proclivities toward a conventual life, cheek by jowl with an American girl who had been early deposited for safe-keeping in a mission convent school; to make the Mexican murderer of the American girl's father in love with her, while the English girl is in love with the Mexican, and her brother in love with the little *religieuse*; to carry on the scenes in a Western State, say Kansas, where the crude social life of the border is led just outside the inclosure of a Roman Catholic mission, presided over by a venerable French pair, Father Caron and Madam Clement, who have transplanted into this wilderness a patch of hoary piety,—to conceive of all this was to show himself no mean artist, so far as regards perception of harmonies and contrasts. Nor is the design altogether feeble. True, the reader is too early aware of the probable guilt of Manuel Silva, but the exact conclusion is not foreseen, and the wavering mind of Dona Solace serves to keep one in doubt as to the final disposition of persons. The events follow in orderly and reasonable succession, and serve to develop the plot. Nothing seems to be wanting which a careful study of the plan of the novel could suggest.

Yet the very care with which the author has worked may be accounted as the reason why he has missed the higher value which his scheme rendered possible. We are led to suspect that he never really saw the mission or mingled in the society about it. He has managed

to set before the reader a sort of Norman's land, carefully bounded, and provided with necessary land-marks, but still answering by no genuine reflex of nature to any real spot in the Western States. We are not complaining that he has so described the scene of his story as to throw the reader off a scent for some particular locality, but that he has failed to make it correspond with the general features of the life which it is supposed to represent. There is not the least inherent improbability in an English baronet holding a large estate hard by an old mission, nor in his permitting two young people, his son and daughter, to go out to see it, and for a time to occupy the premises. There is nothing actually impossible in the sort of life they lead there, yet Mr. Picard has thrown an air of unlikelihood over the whole proceeding by failing to give a touch of genuine Kansan life, shall we say? and by constructing a social system out of the odds and ends of conventional society in any locality, the slight frontier flavor being scarcely perceptible.

It is, however, in the characters themselves that we perceive the art which has not concealed art. Curiously enough, the best portrait in the group confirms our criticism by its excellence. Father Caron may be excepted as a satisfactory likeness. And why? Simply because the subtle old Jesuit, whose every movement is studied, is so finely artificial in the very grain of his nature that one is not offended by the nicely artificial touch with which Mr. Picard has painted him. But the other characters, at least Dona and Manuel, call for broad treatment and for a free, generous expression which they do not get. The young English people, ordinary in their personality, are individualized by trifling tricks of conversation and behavior, and fail to live in any genuine fashion.

In the brief space at our disposal, we are in danger of saying our say with

too little reserve, and we should be sorry to leave upon the reader's mind the notion that Mr. Picard's novel was a conventional, metallic sort of work. We wish rather to intimate that it is a book out of the ordinary course, but that it suffers from what, for want of a better term, we must call literary lacquer. It recalls to one the pictures, more familiar once than now, of what was known as the Dusseldorf school, highly finished, painfully glazed, correct in all that the schools could teach in the way of manipulation, but interposing a perfectly perceptible medium between the person who looked and the bit of nature he was asked to look at.

VII.

By chance, the novels which we have so far been considering have all been by men, and reflect Northern culture. Mr. Pyle's, perhaps, may be excepted, as occupying a species of border State position, and thrown by its subject and time out of the current of fashions in fiction; but the others give us a view of civilization as it presents itself to the eye of the dweller in cities. The next three happen to be by Southern women, and two of them are distinctly Southern in theme. The third, Miss Baylor's *On Both Sides*,¹ may answer as a connecting link, since it is very cosmopolitan in its plan, and from internal evidence alone gives little sign of Southern origin. The book is confessedly a somewhat composite affair. It consists of two stories: the scenes of the one are laid in England, of the other in America, while some of the characters in the former are carried forward in the latter. There is a suspicion of an after-thought in this continuation of the beginning. It is as if the author wrote her first story, *The Perfect Treasure*, to sketch English social life as it appeared to a small party

¹ *On Both Sides*. A Novel. By FRANCES COURTENAY BAYLOR. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1886 [1885].

of Americans who were domiciled at Cheltenham, and afterward had the happy thought of bringing the English characters to America, with a roving commission to discover phases of American social life, and incidentally to exhibit their own colors in stronger light than it was possible to do at home. Many of the same persons appear in *The Perfect Treasure* and *On this Side*, and to all intents and purposes the two stories may answer as one continuous book.

This is the more easily granted, since neither in the first nor in the second story is there any great concern shown for the development of a well-constructed novel. The "perfect treasure" is an English butler, who takes service in the American family, and who, in the opening scenes, promises to be the hero of the tale, but is so repeatedly forgotten by the author of his being that at the very end of the story he is hustled to the front as a thief, with scarcely the least warning to the reader, and with no after explanation. The fact is that Miss Baylor became so much more interested in the fortunes of Job Ketchum, a highly efflorescent Westerner, who makes an irruption into the calm English society of Cheltenham, that she quite forgot what she had called her story, and apparently what she had set out to develop.

In the second part, as we have said, several of the English characters reappear on this side of the water, and their experiences in New York, Baltimore, Washington, Niagara, Michigan, California, and Virginia afford an opportunity for contrasting national peculiarities of manner and temperament. The reader sees from the above enumeration how varied may be the American life which is presented. Miss Baylor displays an astonishing facility not so much in sketching representative persons in these places as in hitting off social characteristics, and in reproducing something of the in-

digenous life. The English are always and everywhere the same, the Americans differ according to localities; and part of the fun is in the changes of view which one gets of the English character by this diversity of contrast.

So far as the book is a novel, it is a very indifferent one. Miss Baylor is quite inattentive to her characters in their parts. The lovers love in a haphazard, accidental sort of fashion; their relations to each other are never kept long in mind. The author seems to catch herself up now and then, to remember that she has some affairs of these people to settle, and then goes about it with dispatch. Such carelessness is amusing in a book like this, but it would be likely to stand very much in the author's way if she were writing a deliberate novel. As it is, *On Both Sides* has something of the gay lawlessness which makes the *Pickwick Papers* so diverting. There is an exuberance of good-humor which keeps the reader entertained without any severe demand on his judgment, and it is long since we have had such clever caricature as is shown in Job Ketchum on the American side, and Sir Robert Heathcote and Mrs. Sykes on the English. Much is forgiven to one who makes us laugh honestly, and if on cooler reflection we think that Miss Baylor has sometimes laid the color on rather thickly, — that she has brought together in Job Ketchum, for instance, too many incongruous virtues and linguistic felicities, — we are not prevented from asking our friends right and left to amuse themselves with a book so bright as to create a sort of despair, as in the presence of literary prodigality. If this author would attend to character and its incident with more care, and keep her exuberance within bounds, she would be a positive addition to our literary force. The little picture of the interior of a decayed Virginian household, dashed off almost at random, one may say, is so admirable that one cannot help wishing

for the same kind of work carried out with sustained skill and the sort of structural ability which is essential to thoroughly good work in fiction.

VIII.

What Miss Baylor lacks in composition, Mrs. Tiernan, another Southern writer, has in a well-developed degree. *Suzette*¹ is a Richmond story, of the antebellum days, and the reader is introduced to the society of two or three families who may be taken to represent the *noblesse* of that highly self-respecting city. The heroine is a volatile creole from New Orleans, who drops, half by chance, into a family consisting of a gentle old lady and her disagreeable, domineering, and patrician son. This last character will be recognized early in his career by astute novel-readers. He is the unpleasant person who at once excites extreme antagonism in the heroine, but by occasional revelations of character makes it clear that if you scratch the brute a little you will find the passionate lover. It is of little consequence that in this case the hero is already engaged to a fine lady. Such a fact only affords a convenient cover for the growth of relations between the hero and the real heroine, and the novel is finished when the underground stream of love, scarcely seen at any time, rises at last into the light.

The hardened novel-reader foresees the end from the beginning, but it would be a mistake to suppose that he therefore reads on as if it were a foregone conclusion. One has really told nothing about such a novel as *Suzette* when one has said that opposite poles become magnetized. Indeed, the very use of a spiritual plot so familiar as this gives an opportunity to the novelist to show of what stuff she is made. Just as the fine employment of every-day material is one test of an artist's power, so the

translation into fresh terms of a well-known spiritual law is another. Mrs. Tiernan has brought together two well-defined characters, and has shown their influence upon each other through a series of incidents which are delightfully unhackneyed. She has used a society which she evidently knows by heart, and it is one which has not figured much in the higher order of American fiction. There have been stories enough and to spare of Southern social life, but heretofore such stories have almost inevitably had a partisan character; they have in one form or another reflected the author's attitude toward slavery, and have taken sides in the great ethical conflict. What we like in *Suzette* is the fresh delineation of life at Richmond among the well born and bred, with the slave playing his own part, and the system of slavery inextricably entangled with society. Mrs. Tiernan well says:—

"Edmund's public of that day, indeed Edmund himself, then honestly believed slavery to be the palladium of freedom. To touch or even to breathe upon the institution was like touching the sacred person of Spanish royalty, which done even accidentally is treason. Thus much must be said in order to explain why people began to turn at least a cool shoulder toward Gaskell. He was so unfortunate as to have incurred the suspicion of not only defrauding his neighbor, but of attacking the foundations of society."

This is almost the only passage in the book in which the author steps aside from her story to make an explanation, and just as it is it serves to emphasize her artistic view of her work. She is telling a story; she is working in certain material which has a historic interest, and she does not feel called upon to enforce any special view of the ethical bearings of the material in which she is working. One may guess at her sympathies from the manner in which she treats the charming girl Innis and

¹ *Suzette*. A Novel. By MARY SPEAR TIERNAN. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1885.

the incident of her giving freedom to her bird; but after all, this incident was a constituent and very cleverly conceived part of the design of the story.

It is a satisfaction to welcome into our literature so admirable a representative of a very honest class of fiction. The writer takes rank with authors more common in England than with us, who are concerned with the fortunes of a few well-discriminated men and women; who write with clear touch of a social life which is not foreign from their personal knowledge, and have the art to choose scenes and incidents which are thoroughly interesting. They have no great mission to accomplish, but they succeed excellently in pleasing their readers, and in this case, at least, one is introduced to a field of American life which is fairly new to literature.

IX.

Miss McClelland's novel¹ of Southern life carries one into a region which is only not absolutely new because it has been brought vividly into notice of late by Miss Murfree's powerful tales. The scene is laid chiefly in the mountain region of North Carolina, bordering on Tennessee. In a terrible freshet a young and beautiful mother and child have been rescued by a sturdy mountaineer; but the child is already dead, and the mother has suffered a severe blow. The child is buried, and the mother is tenderly brought back to life by the rude mountain folk. There is no trace whatever of her antecedents, and by a physical process not unknown to the medical profession, and not entirely strange in fiction, she returns to consciousness with a great blur in her memory where there should have been clear perception of recent facts. She is wholly bereft of any recollection except the faint remembrance of childhood. She speaks French, which was the language

of her childhood, and is delightfully ingenuous.

By a simple series of accidents not at all improbable, the friends of Lady, as she is called by the people who harbor her, have no doubt of her death. They even visit, as they think, her grave and that of her child, and thus she is left entirely to strangers. For three years her life goes on in seclusion. She acquires English speech, but it is in some subtle way good English as contrasted with the dialect of the mountains. She also — and this is the main thing — inspires her deliverer with profound love. He loves her with a strange, protecting, adoring passion, which she accepts, returning a child's instinctive trust. This relation of the two is delicately outlined, and goes far toward reconciling the reader to the situation.

It happens that before they are married, as they purpose to be, two young men, traveling in the mountains, come upon the lady at a rustic wedding feast of a neighbor, and are greatly impressed by her beauty and by her strange unlikeness to her surroundings. They get her story from others in a curiously distorted form, and go back with it and with sketches to Washington. The family of Lady hear their narrative, told as a singular romance of mountain life, and are variously affected by it. They do not, however, perceive clearly the full meaning; their suspicions are not aroused, since they have had indubitable evidence of the death of the young mother.

But the presence of these strangers out of her old familiar world has an influence upon Lady, who is at the time gradually recovering the use of her dormant memory. Before her own wedding-day comes, she wanders away under stress of thought, falls asleep from exhaustion, is brought back, and lies in a delirium, out of which she is again delivered by the mountaineer. This second shock has restored her old consciousness. Like the man who was

¹ *Oblivion*. An Episode. By M. G. McCLELLAND. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1885.

wondrous wise, she has now back both her eyes. The three years just passed are a blank to her. She does not know the people about her, though she recognizes their devotion, and she is impatient to get back to her husband, whom she had left sick. The mountaineer, Dick Corbyn, attends her to Washington, and delivers her over to her family.

Such, in rude outline, is a story which so far will seem to many simply an attempt at availing one's self of a *motif* in fiction lately made popular. It is a great deal more. Miss McClelland writes a brief note to the effect that she had not read *Called Back* when she wrote *Oblivion*. It could scarcely have mattered if she had. *Called Back* was not the first book to use the scheme common to both, but *Called Back* was merely a clever piece of invention; *Oblivion* uses a forced situation to disclose certain fine qualities of character and to sketch scenes of mountain life. The pictures of nature and humanity in the rough country are not charged with the fine imaginative power which we admire in Miss Murfree's stories, but they strike one as accurate and taken at first hand, — a little toned down, perhaps, and relieved of ugliness, but, like Miss Murfree's, instinct with human interest.

The defect of the book is unfortunately a central one. A character like that of Dick Corbyn would never have taken the step of marrying Lady, under the conditions of the tale. Not that the man would have been deterred by any such prudential considerations as a possible husband still living, and the absolute lack of knowledge respecting Lady's antecedents: the simple mountaineers had a plausible theory which accounted for all this. But one so finely organized in emotional nature as Dick would have instinctively shrunk from the indefinite advantage which he was taking of Lady. He sees well enough that she

does not love him as other women whom he knows love, but his passion is supposed to blind him. It might blind him to all ordinary consequences, but it would not have stilled the deeper voice of his nature which ought to cry out against the unnatural alliance. This mistake is vital, yet it is of such a nature that, while it prevents the book from taking a high rank as a work of art, it does not prevent us from recognizing in this author a capital gift, and we may reasonably hope that we have in her a new writer who will at any rate give us valuable pictures of life at the South. She has a firm hold of her pencil and a knack at hitting off telling sketches. Every fresh worker in the field of Southern life, who has the genuine home-bred quality, is a distinct gain, and we heartily hope that Miss McClelland will show us what she can do without the aid of an adventitious plot, which is likely to obscure the really excellent qualities of her work.

X.

At the last moment, as we complete our survey of the most notable of the newer works of fiction, comes a novel different in kind and temper from any which we have been considering. We leave to others the duty of trying Mr. Astor's novel of *Valentino*¹ by the standards of history, and content ourselves with calling attention to it as a contribution to fiction. Mr. Astor has busied himself with the political and amorous intrigues of Cesare Borgia, and has made that somewhat unsavory gentleman the central figure in his narrative. We say central, and yet in the series of tableaux of which the book consists Borgia is not always present and not always conspicuous. As a composition the book has this defect, that the reader's interest is not riveted upon any one figure long enough at a time to

¹ *Valentino*. An Historical Romance of the Sixteenth Century in Italy. By WILLIAM WALDORF

ASTOR. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1885.

ers were many men like Brown, whom the astute statesman used with infinite skill and great effectiveness; but certainly Brown and Cromwell were alike only in a few wholly superficial points. So far as calibre of brain went, Cromwell's brain could have been divided to fill the skulls of a whole regiment of Browns. In all the great collection of Brown's writings furnished by Mr. Sanborn, there is nothing to show that he ever gave a moment's thought (beyond such attention to crops and cattle as circumstances forced upon him) save to the one matter of negro slavery in the United States. A fervent Christian, he had Scripture ever on his tongue; but he had accepted his creed from childhood, and had only to read and re-read his Bible with simple faith and adoration. The great world held for him only one idea, — the abolition of slavery in the Southern States; all other thoughts and purposes of humankind, all activities of men, all civilizations, all problems, all rights and wrongs, all moral and mental developments and tendencies of the human race, were absolutely as nothing for him. None of these things existed within his vision. His picture of life and the world held only the single figure of one great duty standing alone on the groundwork of Christianity, with no surroundings, no background, no distance, no atmosphere. Of course he became a fanatic, and fell into those errors which entire absence of the perception of relationship, per-

spective, and proportion surely involve. Yet with all these limitations, and in spite of the fact that his achievements have to be vindicated by the immunity accorded to fanatics before they can shed lustre upon the actor, Brown compelled in his lifetime from many, and among posterity is likely to compel from all, both affection and respect. It will freely be admitted that what he did was ill-judged, of limited usefulness, morally defensible only by arguments not generally admissible; but it will be said concerning himself that he was a zealous, courageous, tender-hearted, self-devoted, noble-souled servant of the loftiest cause which men have yet been called to advance. In life his face told at once his loving-kindness and his fearlessness, his capacity to dare and to suffer for those who needed aid. His manner won the love of little children, inspired the enthusiastic loyalty of friends, extorted a singular respect and forbearance from many foes. All felt that he was not like other men; that he would not act like them, nor accept their standards, nor submit to be judged by their laws. The world has yielded to these bold and high demands, and in his case makes exceptions to its usual rules for trial and judgment. In spite of the bloody horrors of Osawatomie and the insane frenzy of the Harper's Ferry raid, Brown will not be thought a murderer nor quite a madman, and will be held in noble memory by the coming generations of the American people.

TRAVEL AND ART.

MR. HOWELLS, in his character of Italian traveler, figures in our mind not unlike the gentlemen of some romantic drama, who age seven or a score of years between the acts. Since his en-

trance, time has touched him lightly; and now our traveler fills no part more gracefully than that of his début, in which all the admirable qualities of his art, more ripe and rich and full with

long observation and culture, still blend in a congenial impersonation.¹

Florence, however, is not Venice, and not even the literary craft, for whose sake Mr. Howells has so zealously improved the years since he "swam in a gondola," can give to the City of the Flower the fascination which his youthful pen stole from her sister by the Adriatic. But one of the wonders of Italy is the marvelous difference in the character of the cities which island the plains and turret the steepes of that changeful land, so that, on entering each, one seems to have disembarked in a strange country; and thus it comes about quite naturally that in Florence one forgets he is not in Venice, and in the home of Dante and Cosimo there is some compensation for the loss of the eye's delight on those silent canals where tragedy and heroism sink back and melt away into the shadows. Venice is the city of a vanished past, but the past of Florence is still real; the affairs of the turbulent democracy touch us moderns more nearly, the names of its leaders live in our books, and the events of its fiery life stand out vividly in the memory of the world. It happens easily, therefore, to a traveler of Mr. Howells's sureness of instinct that the historical and literary tradition of Florence is the central fact, about which the girdling hills and sweeping river, the broad driveways of the short-lived capital of Italy, the gray-walled streets and cook-shop markets, and the cloisters, with their placid faded frescos and green grass, are only clustering details, tones of local color, means of relief and facilities for pleasant setting, prologues and sketches by the way and tail-pieces at the end of the chapter. Amid all this his eyes are searching the faces of the shadows that jostle him in the old quarters, and he follows them, like a novelist eavesdropping on his characters, to win back the

look of that dead Florence, now so spectral, but over gay and vital when the thing was earnest.

It must be conceded that, except the poets, who do everything best, the novelists write the most entertaining history, and Mr. Howells has not been denied the common distinction. He does not, of course, give us any elaborate study, but deals with the episodes of the chroniclers, and recounts their more famous anecdotes of feud and romance. The manner in which they narrate facts, or what went for facts in those confiding days, has, perhaps, a special attraction for a writer who likes to see things just as they were in those rude times; for the scenes and incidents are given with that reality which modern sensibility would no longer suffer in refined literature. One can see very plainly in the old books, if he cares to turn their leaves, what Florentine passion and action were, and Mr. Howells uses these sources to give, if not a great canvas like *Romola*, painter effects, rapid, intense, and indelible. He, however, is not inured to these inhumanities of old Florence as the chroniclers were, and must relieve the tension of his story by bringing out the minor characters, the infinite dramatic play of motive and gesture in the conduct of the participants, and blend something of the novel and the drama with the bald history; and he can do this with no sacrifice of truthfulness, for it is not in passion so much as in its violent expression in pitiless deeds that life has changed since the Medicean age. Even this is not enough to soften down the iron lines of the old records, but from time to time the modern adapter of the tales must emerge upon the comedy of the contemporary life that is now going on, or the beauty of nature which has continued through all; and thus he continually lights up the dark course of murder and treachery by some

¹ *Tuscan Cities*. By WILLIAM D. HOWELLS. With illustrations from drawings and etchings by

JOSEPH PENNELL and Others. Boston: Ticknor & Co. 1886.

gleam of the humor, never far distant, in Italian life, or of the sentiment which always invests the Italian landscape, and he thoughtfully reminds us at frequent intervals that we live in a much more comfortable century. Taken altogether, the successive irregular blocks of text do make the mosaic, which he set out to blend, of Florence past and present; and the effect is a very pleasing one, and within its close limits is wonderfully complete.

But Florence is a large subject, and is really so various that it becomes perplexing even in Mr. Howells's skillful rendering of it by the help of his novelist's imagination and treatment; and, privately, we find in his briefer and simpler impressions of the other Tuscan cities more of the pleasurable of our old Venetian Days. Siena, in particular, is a delightful study of a town which, by its open garden spaces and its wooded road to Belcaro, seems to be more hospitable to the spring than any other of the northern cities. It has its legends and traditions, too, and its art, and civic and religious memorials, as none needs to be told, and the whole, treated in the same way as in the case of Florence, is turned into the *panforte* of the country. In Siena, Mr. Howells is more of a traveler than when he was settled for the winter in Florence; and though he is in all places an indefatigable sight-seer, he inspected this city with extraordinary thoroughness. His eyes were less upon his books; and, under the temptation of the Italian charm to which he often yields, he seems to give the rein to his fancy, and to allow more scope, both of perception and feeling, to that imaginative element in his nature which was, possibly, more noticeable in his early work, but is still the secret of his success in writing of things Italian. The presence of this spirit is most marked in the Siennese sketch, but

it comes upon one again in the ride to Lucca and in the wanderings there. The last of the cities, the group of Pistoia, Prato, and Fiesole, are more perfunctorily treated, but they are of very minor importance in a description of historic or contemporary Tuscany, and the justice that is done them will not be thought scanty. The volume as a whole is well proportioned, and it has, perhaps, the greatest freshness of topic that was possible in so bewritten a field. Its vividness is not much, if any, increased by the illustrations, nor do these add to the value of the book what might have been expected in other ways, not even as an accurate and suggestive help to the eye in the mere effort to imagine buildings, walls, and streets. They are, like the cover, neither the best nor the worst of their kind.

To read De Amicis's Spain¹ directly afterwards would suggest to the reader an entirely new standpoint of criticism. The country, as the author remarks, is not unlike Italy in its general atmosphere, and there is a cousinly relationship between the two great branches of the Latin race. The mode of approach which De Amicis uses is very different from that of the Northerner. It is, for one thing, far more sensuous. To Mr. Howells, except in those rare paragraphs where he confesses his temptation to stay in some sunny retreat, and there "loaf and invite his soul" for the rest of his days, Italy is a mental fact, to be come at intellectually, after the Saxon way; but to the kindred-blooded Italian Spain is very often only a sensation. We do not refer to the emotional susceptibility, the readiness for "rosés and raptures," the theatrical (though quite natural) attitudinizing, the tears, carnival of gayety, and pensive regrets, of the exuberantly expressive Southern nature; but there seems to be in it a real knowledge, which is sympathetically arrived at other-

¹ *Spain and the Spaniards*. By EDMONDO DE AMICIS. The Guadalquivir Edition. New York

and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. The Knickerbocker Press. 1885.

wise than by the brain — intimations such as an impressionable traveler in these parts must sometimes have caught from popular song or dance, or any of a score of chance unfathomed things, and which rouse in him at once the conviction that in these alien races there is a mystery he can never understand. The sharp contrasts of sun and shadow in those dark-walled streets, the repose that pervades the mountain-perched towns, have their analogue in the people's nature, and to the Northerner it is a sealed secret, as inaccessible as the impulses of a gypsy heart. To this sense of impassable barriers in humanity De Amicis himself confesses, when he comes upon the strange gypsy quarters in the suburbs of Granada, of which he gives a picturesque and powerful account, though his stay was brief, and his departure from among them a hasty and ignominious flight. These denizens of the rocks are beyond his faculties of apprehension; but in the case of the Spaniards themselves he succeeds in an affiliation which is felt rather than expressed in his pages, and he seems to reach it by instinct rather than observation. The readiness with which he appropriates their civilization reminds one of Grant White in England, but the method is not the same; it is not by consanguinity of mind, but of sense, of which the ways are as subtle as Brahma's.

This quality of De Amicis underlies the surprise and glamour which make reading his book much more like a real excursion amid the scenes he describes than is usually the case, even with the most excellent literary travelers. The mere abandon of the author, which in a man of our own breeding would be offensive, does of itself transport one to a foreign clime, and the impression of Spanish gravity suffers nothing by the contrast, while the passion that lurks behind that haughty reserve is felt more vitally. The consequence is that one enters into Spain at once, and, escaping

all tedious detentions, begins to enjoy the land immediately in De Amicis's own spirit. It is curious to observe how similar his mood is to that of a transatlantic tourist; he is as eager to see the walls and streets of a Spanish capital, or the historic sites of some time-forgotten town, as if the lanes of his own Genoa were as broad as the avenues of Cleveland and as destitute of Dorias as Omaha. He runs to a cathedral, where he is as arrant an unbeliever as any country parson, and views little boxes of bones and horrible wooden crucifixions as if such things were never heard of in Italy. He climbs towers, loses himself in alleys, delights in peasant costumes, hurries to the fêtes, strays into promising cafés, adores the old masters, and is always as ready for an adventure or a note as the most tireless of American correspondents, while he suffers from traveler's trials as sorely as Mr. Howells, and sets them aside as gracefully. He is homesick, too, and has a panic or two in his solitude until he finds some companion of the country to talk to; for that is his national necessity. Sometimes one thinks that the Italian is more curious than the widest-awake American, and enjoys more in anticipation, and expects stranger wonders and novelties, than the most sentimental of the readers of *The Last Days of Pompeii*. With all this ardor for the revelations of romance, art, and life in a new land, so like his own in many of its showy interests, there is a sense of its remoteness from himself which is an instructive matter for reflection. The American expects to find Spain remote, but so is Italy to him; and the extent of the living modern element in Italy, its share in European civilization, cannot be more forcibly brought home than by the marked and wide difference which the Italian traveler notices and defines between Spain and his own country. This isolation of Spain in the modern world is aptly typi-

fied by the city of Granada as he found it, solitary and apart like an island. But, for all that, he understood the Spaniards as very few foreigners have done at any time; he sets forth their good qualities, and for their peculiarities he has the kindness of a humorist of the Cervantes order. The literature of the country had taught him many a lesson beside that, before he took his voyage, and his delight in it was the common ground on which he met the cultivated men who became his friends, young or old. Poetry in Spain has still something of the true popular character, and is on the tongues of men as well as in the books. Indeed, from this volume one would judge that it shared with politics the distinction of being still alive in that death-ridden land.

But we are delayed too long by the charm of a book not now printed for the first time. The Guadalquivir edition of it is a very beautiful example of typography and the bookbinder's art. The paper is a delight to the fingers, and the text lies on the page artistically. The illustrations are either inserted prints on Japanese paper, or etchings, or photogravures, and are usually suggested by the references in the text to well-known places or pictures, so that there is an agreeable variety of architectural and figure pieces. In the copy before us the printing of the etchings is not remarkably successful; in fact, the beauty of the whole owes less than the usual proportion to the illustrations, but results from the excellent workmanship of the volume as a mere book. It is in this respect luxurious, in the sense in which that word has nothing of excess in it; and is fully equal to the works of a similar kind from the same press, which have been previously warmly welcomed and praised in these columns.

The last publication¹ upon our list

¹ *American Etchings. A Collection of Twenty Original Etchings*, by MORAN, PARRISH, FERRIS, SMILLIE, and Others; with descriptive text

is rather a portfolio than a book, for the text is merely explanatory, and its parts have no connection with one another. The twenty etchings which are bound up in it, by their great variety and freedom, are a speaking proof of the ease with which the art lends itself to the individuality of its students, to their peculiarities of both taste and of technical education; and to this fact something of its favor is to be ascribed. But, as one turns over the prints, the consideration is forced upon him that they represent rather an experimental than a settled state of the art. The range is from most careful and painstaking methods derived from formal traditions to the most sketchy efforts of modern impressionism; and success is not to be affirmed of all the attempts indiscriminately. The future of the art is to be looked for in that field in which it has original and exclusive powers, undoubtedly; in the production of those bold and fresh effects which are at once a surprise and a felicity. Academic or pre-Raphaelite work in this art fails of the distinction and richness of a more free and broad style; and we say this, although it seems to us that the most pleasing of these etchings are those in which there is the most finished detail and the firmest handling, such as *Moonlight on the Andros-coggin*, the *Devil's Way*, *Old Pockets at New Bedford*, and *Mrs. Merritt's admirable portrait of Sir Gilbert Scott*. This fact, however, does not disturb us; for it is to be noticed that the editor's text, in commenting upon the various characteristics of the series, frequently insists on the point that success in the more vigorous and novel manner is not to be obtained except when a man holds his powers well in hand, and has a thorough knowledge of the dangerous temptations which attend the absence of all restraint. No one but the master can

and biographical matter, by S. R. KOEHLER and Others. Boston: Estes & Lauriat. 1886.

safely trust his free hand and obey an impulse without question, in any art. Others will fall into some rudeness, some error of taste or truth, some indifference to one or another element in the whole, which mars the pleasure of the work and often spoils it. The drawing must not be impossible, nor the main lines of an interior like a crushed hat, nor the masses utterly indistinguishable as to substance, as sometimes happens; and defects of this nature are not obscured, though not unkindly dwelt

upon, in the frank criticism of the editor. American etchers are, generally speaking, young at their art, and its laws clearly are still matters of discussion among them. The present collection exhibits the state of their practice and opinion with great catholicity, and is a fair example of the quality of the work that is being done. It is to be noted, however, that, by a curious error, one of our better etchers, Parrish, whose name appears on the title-page, has no place elsewhere.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB.

WHAT is this quality in the sad tones of Russian writers, as in all Turgeneff's stories, for example, so different from that of any other people? The sadness of the German, in literature, often appears weak, self-indulgent, sentimental; the sadness of the Frenchman, is a little too neatly expressed; the sadness of the Englishman or American is oftenest only a dramatic and imagined one, for his own genuine sorrows he is not apt to express, openly and directly. In the Russian mournfulness there lies something heavy, oppressive, — terrible in its reality, and in the simple, honest expression of it; as if the dark mood were the natural air of the country, that all men breathed, and that no one need be reticent about; as if some weight of national wrong and hopelessness were added to all individual sorrow, so as to make it the common experience, and even the common bond. Turgeneff seems to me one of the greatest figures of our time, and in all ways the most mournful figure. A friend of mine, while on his travels, wrote me some years ago from Paris: "The biggest thing I have seen abroad is Mont Blanc, but the greatest is Turgeneff." Then he re-

ferred to the sober existence of the man, and how he spoke pathetically of his own perennial interest in birds and beasts, and affirmed that except for this he did not know how he could get on with human life at all. I was reminded of this when I read in a late number of *L'Art* the *Mémoires posthumes d'un Artiste*, by Turgeneff, of which I venture to give here one extract in translation: —

"Enough, — enough! It is enough! Enough of agitation, of self-abandonment. It is time to collect one's self; to take the head in the two hands, and to say to one's heart, 'Be still!' . . . All has been experienced, all has been felt a thousand times. I am tired. . . . Yes, all has been, all has already been; everything repeats itself endlessly; and when I say to myself that all things will continue the same through eternity, as if a law, an edict, had commanded it, then I revolt, — yes, I revolt! . . . Alas! age is upon me. . . . It must be avowed: all grows sombre about me, and life becomes colorless. . . . There comes back to my memory a night in Moscow. It was late. I drew near the barred window of an old church, and

leaned my forehead against the rough pane. All was gloom under the low arches ; a forgotten lamp scarcely burned with a slender reddish flame before a smoke-dulled picture ; one could but discern confusedly in the obscurity the lips of the saint, — lips severe and sad ; mournful shadows entered on all sides, and seemed to wish to crush with their heavy weight the feeble glimmer of the struggling light. In my heart at this hour I feel that same light burn, and those same shadows enter."

— There are all ways of wasting time, of fretting the heart, and of missing the prime relish of existence. One way is by the misrule and trivial speculation which we permit in our thoughts. Physically, we may withdraw from the crowd, but our minds still remain in the crowd and are jostled on every side. "The world is too much with us," we confess with a sigh, when it would be more pertinent and truthful if we put the situation thus : "We are too much with the world ;" for our reprieve therefrom, our rest and renovation of spirit, are much more within our control than we are accustomed to believe. Antoninus lays it down as a rule that we ought to "check in the series of our thoughts everything that is without a purpose and useless, but most of all the over-curious feeling and the malignant." And elsewhere he declares, "It is in our power to have no opinion about a thing, and not to be disturbed in our soul." It is precisely this privilege, overlooked or unesteemed, that, if we would but exercise it, would save our spirits from so much needless fret and attrition. A selfish indifference is not to be commended, — no more so is a profuse and indiscriminate altruism, — but the bestowal of one's thought is a dear outlay, and the object, or objects, on which it is expended should be, in every instance, worthy. In what a fool's court of justice these pragmatic sympathies of ours involve us ! How we try to settle daily,

hourly, petit cases that concern ourselves not at all, and but slightly and transiently our associates ! With what sense of unthriftiness and inefficiency one rouses one's self from some train of idle reflections on what has been said and done during the day just closing ! One snaps one's fingers impatiently at the gossip of his neighborhood, and cries, "Hence afar, ye profane !" but, turning, discovers a bevy of gossips holding unreprieved sway in his own brain. It might not be amiss to post this advertisement : Wanted, a strict and incorruptible police force at the doors and in the lobbies of the mind, to keep out the rabble of the Thoughts which we do not need to think. We are none of us private citizens to the full extent of our right and privilege. Yet we approve and admire what we might term the grand bad manners of Genius, when it waves its hand towards the distance, and thus delivers itself : —

"Leave me ! There's something come into my thought,
That must and shall be sung high and aloof !"

Well for us if we sometimes imitated what we admire, and so got away where we could hear our muses sing to us in quiet.

Spite of the adage, Misery loves company, it never has been demonstrated that Misery convalesces more rapidly for seeing much company. On the contrary, for many kinds of spiritual indisposition a mere letting alone proves wonderfully remedial. I would not, perhaps, go to such lengths of insistence on this point as does one of my acquaintance, who declares that when it has been his luck to fall among thieves he regards as Good Samaritan him who goes by on the other side, and as Priest and Levite those who cross over and make particular examination of the situation. The unfortunate of the remodeled parable must be understood to be of a most irritably sensitive and retiring disposition, preferring to recover himself alone,

as best he may, rather than have the full extent of his losses ascertained, as it would be, of necessity, if he accepted assistance.

Any inclination towards fleeing the social centre is quickly noted and characterized as morbid: but what of that perpetual craving for society manifested by some, and their panic dread of being alone for an interval? Is not this, as well as the opposite, tendency a morbid one? The recluse offends by an implied preference for the society of himself to that of all others, but, at the other extreme, it is an indigent soul, living by uncertain alms, that must always go out of itself to find good company, that has never learned the essential nature and sweet uses of solitude. It has been well said that "a man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will." Solitude is the imagination's great friend, — not the solitude, simply, of unsecular place and hour, but the worker's thought must be solitary, withdrawn, one alone: his multiplex self is reduced to its lowest terms; he banishes prospects and pleasures and all the mobile crowd of wishes, inquiries, preferences, and prejudices, and, for the time, are vacant those mansions of his mind in which the images of his dearest friends are lodged. Such withdrawal and renunciation pertain not merely to will or choice, but are a necessity to the worker. De Quincey's observation, "No man ever will unfold the capacities of his own intellect who does not at least checker his life with solitude," is permanently true. Undoubtedly, the most abiding results are those which are worked out in the tranquillity of partial seclusion. The checker of solitude affords this advantage also: it makes the foil against which to set off the rich and varied colors of our connected and social life. An occasional withdrawing from society but strengthens our alliance with it. Stand off, and help your neighbor, might be offered as a precept for experiment.

Of two who espouse the cause of humanity at some juncture of humanity's need, which will render the better service, — he who passionately and unreservedly identifies himself with all the rancors and indignations of the cause, or he who is able frequently to retire to some ground of calm insulation, unreached by rancors and indignations? It is necessary somewhat to idealize the cause; and to idealize, one must not always be *in medias res*.

Finally, for keeping the spirit's peace, perhaps no better direction can be given than the following (once more citing Antoninus): "Whenever thou hast been compelled by circumstances to be disturbed, quickly return to thyself, and do not continue out of tune longer than while the compulsion lasts; for so thou shalt master the harmony by continually recurring to it." Happy are they who possess the power of stopping discordant vibrations with the cessation of the cause which produced them. With the most of us, to be out of tune is the commoner phase of our music: we who scarcely know what is harmony, — how shall we with ease recur to it?

— It is surprising what a pleasure we take in an apt similitude. Not only does it enter largely into our enjoyment of poetry, but it gives zest to all bright colloquial talk. The voluble centre of any group of listeners — on the street or in the drawing-room — is sure to be heard spicing his narration with the "like" and "as" of the frequent simile. If I were a novelist (as I do not at all thank Heaven I am not) I would keep lists of good similitudes; not only those of my own invention, — which I should not expect to be prosperous, — but those picked up by the wayside in actual speech. It is not so much that they adorn the expression of thought as that they illuminate it. Or if they adorn, it is as the modern jewelry, set with the electric spark. It used to be supposed that in poetry, for instance, figures of

speech were for mere ornamentation. Now we know that in good poetry they are chiefly used for throwing light. So in colloquial speech: the reason we enjoy them seems to be that they hit out the idea like a flash. There is nothing the mind enjoys, after all, like getting an idea, and getting it *quick*, — which is only giving, in a nutshell, the gist of Herbert Spencer's admirable essay on Style. A friend was telling me the other day that he had a new cook. He said (he is a small man), "I am afraid of her. She is as big as a bonded warehouse." I saw in the paper lately that somebody expressed himself as being "dry as a covered bridge." And how can we declare the fineness of anything so well as by saying it is "fine as a fiddle"? The alliteration, no doubt, helps, but it does not count for very much. You could not substitute *fish*, or *feather*, or *fife*, or *flamingo*, though each is fine after a fashion. Nothing will serve but the "fiddle," with its preternatural shine of varnish, its perky angles and curves — pointed like a saucy nose, — with perhaps (but this is venturing into deep psychological water) a suggestion, sub-conscious, of the jaunty fiddler with his airs and graces, dressed as if just out of a bandbox. "Lively as a flea" seems good and lively, but an old sea-captain of mine used to say "he flew around like a flea in a hot skillet." "Like a bumble-bee in a bass-drum" describes the activity of a different sort of temperament.

Why would it not make a pleasant occupation for a rainy day ("wet-weather work," as Ik Marvel would phrase it) to collect what seem to us the most beautiful similitudes of our favorite poets? If, for instance, we were quoting from Longfellow, perhaps it would be, —

"When she had passed it seemed like the ceasing
of exquisite music."

If from Shelley, it might be, —

"And multitudes of dense, white, fleecy clouds
Were wandering in thick flocks along the mountains,
Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind."

If from Matthew Arnold, it might be the close of that beautiful ebb and flow of rhythmical meditation, Dover Beach:

"And we are here as on a darkling plain,
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

If Browning, would it be his Last Words, with their likening of the seen-unseen Beloved to the thither side of the moon?

I would like the liberty of imparting to the Club an odd thing that has happened to me; though it may be, for aught I know, a common experience. I began, when a boy, to keep an *index rerum*. It never got farther than a beautifully arranged table of contents, and a few scattering entries made while the volume had the nutritious fragrance of the bindery still upon it. Among these entries, on a page headed Similitudes, are two similes, in very yellow ink. Now the interesting point is that I have totally forgotten whether they were original or selected. I *hope* they were my own; but they sound more as if they might have come from Longfellow's Hyperion, or from some Conversation of Landor's. It may be that every school-boy (except myself) will recognize and locate them, and that some lively contributor will treat me with cold sarcasm, at some future sitting of the Club, for my ignorance. Here they are: —

"This earthly life is like an album at an inn: we turn over its pages curiously or wearily, and write a scrap of wisdom or of folly, and away."

"He who has loved and served an art is like the child that was nursed by Persephone: he is not subject to the woes of other men, for he has lain in the lap and on the bosom of a goddess."

BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

History and Biography. The fourth volume of the Dictionary of National Biography, edited by Leslie Stephen (Macmillan), comes with gratifying punctuality. It extends from Beal to Biber, and contains among its more important articles one on Bentham, one on Bentinck, one on Bentley by Jebb, one on Bewick by Austin Dobson, and one on Admiral Benbow, whose name seems to have been made for a roaring song. — The Peace of Utrecht, a Historical Review of the Great Treaty of 1713-14, and of the principal events of the war of the Spanish Succession, by James W. Gerard (Putnam): a painstaking work, but difficult to read. It is curious that an American author writing on this subject should apparently make scarcely a reference to movements on this side of the water. Yet, in the far-reaching consequences of the Peace of Utrecht, America was very distinctly involved. We would recommend Mr. Gerard to read Seeley's *Expansion of England*. — Farthest North, or the Life and Explorations of Lieutenant James Booth Lockwood, of the Greely Arctic Expedition, by Charles Larman (Appleton): a most interesting biography of a man who wins the reader's admiration and love for his delightful qualities and his sterling heroism. What companions he and De Long would have been! They were made out of much the same material. It is a pity that the book is not better written, and that the biographer is not as modest for his subject as his subject was for himself. — Myrtila Miner (Houghton): a brief memoir of a remarkable woman who maintained a school for colored girls, when to do so required not only principle, but unflinching courage. One reads with admiration the account of Miss Miner's respect for cleanliness. — The Life and Times of Samuel Bowles, by George S. Merriam. In two volumes. (The Century Co.) One pauses at the title-page, with a hesitation at accepting the implication of Mr. Bowles's central position. Of course, as a newspaper editor, he had much to say about and to do with the times. Every editor is in like case. Then, in two volumes. Is not that rather over much? But once given a personal interest in the subject, and these difficulties are likely to vanish. The biography is an interesting one, with a curious reflection of Mr. Bowles's own taste, in the publication of a large number of family letters. The man was notable, and Mr. Merriam has tried his best to make him alive; but we think he has tried too hard, and has made a book out of all true proportion. There is an enormous amount of talk about Mr. Bowles and his times. We fancy that Mr. Bowles himself, with his newspaper instinct, would have brought the whole work into one quarter of the space, — and then it would be read. That is what he did with the Republican. — Bryant and his Friends, by James Grant Wilson (Fords, Howard & Hulbert), is a volume of pleasant gossip about

the earlier American authors and wits, and particularly the Knickerbocker group, as the title would indicate. Though the book contains little that is new, beyond certain hitherto unpublished letters of no great moment, it contains much that is agreeable to recall, and is written in an appreciative and genial mood. The most interesting chapter is that devoted to brief personal sketches of several of the less noted, not to say wholly obscure, prose-writers and verse men who served as corporals in the Knickerbocker pioneer corps of American letters. Some of them certainly deserve to be brevetted. The work is adorned with three steel plates, — a beautiful head of J. K. Paulding, and the finest engraving we have of Bryant. The portrait of Fitz-Green Halleck, though not so admirable, is still excellent. — *Rameses the Great, or Egypt 3300 years ago* (Scribners), is a reissue, without change, of one of the volumes of the *Library of Wonders*, published a few years ago. A considerable portion of the book is devoted to the historical monuments of Egypt, but the narrative is rather dry, and presumes a good deal on the historical knowledge of the reader. — Mr. George Makepeace Towle has followed his England and Russia in Central Asia, which we noticed on its appearance, with a companion volume, *England in Egypt*, both books being in a series called *Timely Topics*. (Ticknor.) — *The Story of Rome*, from the earliest times to the end of the republic, by Arthur Gilman, is the second in the series entitled *The Story of the Nations*. (Putnam.) The plan of the series supposes a lighter vein in the historical treatment than is ordinarily adopted, but does not therefore exclude exactness of statement. Mr. Gilman, like his predecessor Mr. Harrison, means to give in familiar form the results of historical students, and we think he is more successful than the former. His proportions are better, and we are spared the too jocular tone. The style is generally clear without being elegant, and one gets the impression of a good piece of task-work, rather than a fresh, individual book, forced out of one from his full knowledge and strong interest. — *The Royal Mail, its Curiosities and Romance*, by James Wilson Hyde. (Harpers.) This little book is the work of a superintendent of the Edinburgh post office, who has amused himself by sketching the history of the postal service in England, not from its earliest time, but since the beginning of the century. There are plenty of anecdotes and entertaining incidents. — The second part of the *Greville Memoirs* (Appleton) contains Mr. Greville's journal of the reign of Queen Victoria. Naturally this portion is not so pungent as that which preceded and had to do with a more variegated morality. As moralists we much prefer Queen Victoria's reign, — at least the earlier part of it. As gossips we find the Georges and William much more entertaining; they were surrounded by a society which threw off anecdotes

freely. However, in these two volumes the lover of literature, as well as of politics and history, will find much that is agreeable; he will look with interest, for instance, to see what is said about that obscure power, John Allen. — *The Fall of Constantinople*, being the story of the fourth crusade, by Edwin Pears, LL. B. (Harpers.) "The conquest of Constantinople," Mr. Pears says, "was the first great blunder committed by the West in dealing with the Eastern question," for the result was to let Asia loose upon Europe. The book is very readable, and has that independence of thought in the treatment of great historical questions which is very stimulating to the reader. — *Lincoln and Stanton* is the title of one of the numbers of *Questions of the Day*. (Putnams.) The author is Judge Kelley, the veteran member of the House, who makes in it a study of the war administration of 1861 and 1862, with special consideration of General McClellan's paper in the Century. The appendix contains the author's letter to the Tribune in reply to some strictures of Oliver Johnson. Judge Kelley writes with feeling, but his long experience and earnest patriotism are forces which work on his side. — *Incidents and Anecdotes of the Civil War*, by Admiral Porter (Appleton), is a personal narrative by a prominent officer, who has lately shown an astonishing fertility in book-making. We think this book is by all odds the most readable as it is the most important of the lot; the lively manner in which Admiral Porter writes gives the work almost the air of a romance. — *A Narrative of Military Service*, by General W. B. Hazen. (Ticknors.) This also is a record of personal experience, but in a more dignified and historical form. We wish General Hazen had left out the cheap wood-cut portraits, which detract from the appearance of the book. We are glad to learn from his preface that he reserves his criticism and self-defense for another book. The longer he can put it off the better it will be. — In the new series of *English Worthies*, edited by Andrew Lang, the first volume is *Charles Darwin*, by Grant Allen (Appleton), who is perhaps more to be trusted in a personal and general narrative than in a strictly scientific review of Darwin's work.

Poetry. Ticknor & Co. have brought out, in a most tasteful shape, a new edition of Mr. Howells's poems, including several pieces hitherto uncollected. In its essentials, however, the work belongs to the author's early period, and makes one regret, in spite of his great success as a novelist, that he broke his youthful engagement with the lyric muse. It was a match promising singular happiness, as every living reader of the first issue of these poems is still ready to testify. The lover of choice verse will not find in contemporary poetry anything better in its kind than the touching *Elegy on John Butler Howells*, or *The Song the Oriole Sings*. Such a lyric as *In Earliest Spring*, in which an exquisite imaginative quality breaks into perfect flower at the end, causes one seriously to doubt if realism is after all so superior a thing. — *Wishmaker's Town*, by William Young (Holt), is a small volume of poems, which are not commonplace, yet fail to arrest attention and hold it

surely. The thought which lies back of the poems seems stronger than the poems themselves. — *Utopian Dreams and Lotus Leaves*, by George W. Warder. (Sampson Low, London.) Hopelessly smooth verse. — *A Voyage to the Fortunate Isles, and other Poems*, by Sarah M. B. Piatt. (Houghton.) This is a collection of Mrs. Piatt's poems, made up from her previous volumes, and by its content impressing itself upon the reader's attention, we would hope. — *Afternoon Songs*, by Julia C. R. Dorr (Scribners): a volume of graceful verse. — *The New King Arthur*, an opera without music, by the author of *The Bunting Ball*. (Funk & Wagnalls.) It is also a poem without wit. Mr. Gilbert must begin to regret that he set the fashion of grave nonsense when he finds such a following at his heels. — *Verses*, by Francis Allen Hildard. (Putnams.) The author modestly puts out this volume as rather for his own pleasure than for that of the public. The truth is, every sensible man writes poetry some time or other in his life; only every sensible man does not print his verses. — Dodd, Mead & Co. have reprinted in a very handsome manner Monier Williams's translation of *Sakountala*. This charming India drama is worthy of its present setting, which is in every respect superior to the English edition issued in 1856.

Fiction. Bret Harte's *Maruja* (Houghton) reads like a drama turned into a novel, with the improbabilities of the stage carefully retained. — *Mustard Leaves, or a Glimpse of London Society*, by D. T. S. (Dodd, Mead & Co.) D. T. S. makes the mistake for American readers of beginning with a scene in the New Hampshire hills, and for English readers of completing the story in London. The American judging by the first part will know that the last is untrue, and the Englishman by the last part that the first is untrue. One does not, however, need to be from either country to discover that the story is a silly one. — *Oblivion*, by M. G. McClelland, is an American novel in the *Leisure Hour Series* (Holt), the oblivion being the temporary loss of memory of the heroine. — *Lob lie-by-the-fire, or the Luck of Lingborough*, by Juliana Horatia Ewing (S. P. C. K., London; Youngs, New York), is one of the bright little stories which seem to have been left over from Mrs. Ewing's portfolio. There are some spirited sketches by Caldecott accompanying it. — *Endura, or Three Generations*, a New England Romance, by B. P. Moore (Golden Era Co., San Francisco): a curious sort of novel, into which the author has dumped people and places in an apparently confused heap. The theme of the story is the recovery of a lapsed property, but the author has added all manner of observations on a variety of topics. — *An Ill-Regulated Mind*, by Katharine Wyde (Holt): a volume of the *Leisure Hour Series*, in which a somewhat strained relation between a young man and young woman is played upon with variations. Originality is not a quality to be so forcibly attempted. — *The Red Route*, by William Sime (Holt): an Irish story in the *Leisure Hour Series*. — *Fiammetta*, a summer idyl, by William Wetmore Story (Houghton), is a pathetic little romance, which has a charm of manner and a grace in its pictures of Italian life

that indicate how much of the poet has gone into the making of this prose piece. Mr. Story is always clever, but in this slight work it is not his cleverness so much as his refinement of feeling which strikes one. — Mr. Grant Allen's novel, *Babylon* (Appleton), may be called an international novel from the other side, and we don't know but his Americans and their lingo are as near as we get to the English and their talk. Mr. Allen is a bright man, very handy with his pen, but, on the whole, brighter in spots than in the business of constructing a whole novel. — *Slings and Arrows* and other Tales is a collection of four stories by the late Hugh Conway. (Holt.) — Another volume in the *Leisure Hour Series* (Holt) is *At Bay*, by Mrs. Alexander. — A *Mortal Antipathy* is the apt title given to the tale which Dr. Holmes included in this last year's papers of the *New Portfolio*. (Houghton.) — John Maidment, by Julian Sturgis (Appleton), is the agreeable work of an agreeable writer. It has the circumstance of youth in it; it has also some of the ingenuousness of youth. In spite of Mayfair, there is always a suggestion of unspoiled human nature, and the whole effect is of fiction which is not great nor profound, but is honest and unaffected. — *Bonnyborough*, by Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney. (Houghton.) It is so long since Mrs. Whitney has published a new story that we are curious to see whether she has retained her old audience or is compelled to draw a new one about her. This story has all her old characteristics, though not perhaps the intricacy of plot of the last one. — *High Lights* (Houghton): a slight novel, in which an artist is the hero, and the whole story is led, not so much in the ordinary light of day as under a glass skylight. — Recent numbers of Harper's Handy Series are *The Flower of Doom*, and other stories, by M. Betham-Edwards; *The Dark House*, by G. Manville Fenn; *The Ghost's Touch*, and other stories, by Wilkie Collins; *The Sacred Nugget*, by B. L. Farjeon; *Goblin Gold*, by May Crommelin; *Primus in Indis*, by M. J. Colquhoun; *In Quarters with the 25th (the Black Horse) Dragoons*, by J. S. Winter; *A Barren Title*, by T. W. Speight; *Half-Way*, an Anglo-French Romance; *Christmas Angel*, by B. L. Farjeon. — Recent numbers of Harper's Franklin Square Library are *My Wife's Niece*; *The Mistletoe Bough*, edited by M. E. Braddon; *Self or Bearer*, by Walter Besant.

Music. The Franklin Square Song Collection, No. 3, edited by J. P. McCaskey (Harpers), contains two hundred favorite songs and hymns for schools and homes, nursery and fireside. A good deal of reading about music and musicians is mixed in. We think a selection is just now more important than a collection of songs. — *St. Nicholas Songs, with Illustrations* (The Century Co.), is a charming and novel book for the household where there are children. The volume contains upwards of a hundred pieces, accompanied by music composed expressly for the work. The reader will find nowhere else so large and excellent a collection of American music. — *Music*, by Henry C. Bannister (Holt), is a compact hand-book, intended originally for the use of candidates for middle-

class examinations in England, but useful for the large class of amateurs in this country who desire to study the subject in a less formal manner. — *Musical History*, with a roll of the names of musicians, and the times and places of their births and deaths, by G. A. Macfarren, is a number of Harper's Handy Series, and is a reprint of the same article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. It would be hard to find in the same space a more convenient hand-book of the subject. — Here may be placed, also, *Dancing and its Relations to Education and Social Life*, with a new method of instruction, including a complete guide to the cotillion (German), with 250 figures, by Allen Dodworth. (Harpers.) The author is a veteran teacher, and what he has to say about teaching will receive attention. It ought to receive it all the more for the good taste which he shows in his general observations. — *The Standard Operas*, their plots, their music, and their composers, a *hand-book*, by George P. Upton (Jansen, McClurg & Co.): a useful and well-prepared little volume, which comes almost with a surprise when one considers the incredibly poor accounts of the operas which have appeared in connection with this or that opera company. Mr. Upton tells one just what one wishes to know, and tells it in a simple, readable English. — *The Principles of Expression in Piano-forte Playing*, by Adolph F. Christian. (Harpers.) The author, who is himself a teacher, has aimed to find and formulate principles of expression which answer to a definition of music that does not confine the art to the expression of emotion. Intelligence, not feeling, he says, is the chief requirement in expression. His book bears the mark of thoroughness.

Medicine and Hygiene. Cholera, its Origin, History, Causation, Symptoms, Lesions, Prevention, and Treatment, by Alfred Stillé, M. D. (Leas): a conservative work. Dr. Stillé, at the close, pays a little attention to the proposed or rumored cholera inoculation, and decides that it is entirely opposed to the whole course of pathological investigation of the disease. — *Lectures on the Principles of House Drainage*, by J. P. Putnam. (Ticknor.) The principles are fully and freely illustrated by intelligible examples, and the book is one more contribution to the art of clean and healthy living. We notice, by the way, a curious paragraph on the last page. The peppermint test is described. The assistant is to carry a two-ounce bottle of oil of peppermint up to the roof and pours the contents into the soil-pipe. "The assistant," Mr. Putnam proceeds, "remains upon the roof until the examination within the house has been completed; otherwise the odor clinging to his clothes will be likely to follow him into the house." Can't the poor fellow come down from the roof and sit on the doorstep? — *Brain-Rest*, being a disquisition on the curative properties of prolonged sleep, by J. Leonard Corning, M. D. (Putnams.) Dr. Corning describes also the mechanical contrivances which he has invented for regulating the cerebral circulation. — *Common Sense in the Nursery*, by Marion Harland (Scribners), has appeared in part in *Babyhood*, but in its present complete and comprehensive form will be

of real value to many mothers. It is experience, judgment, and affection precipitated into advice so simple and rational as to commend itself at once to right-minded people. — *Twenty-Five Years with the Insane*, by Daniel Putnam. (MacFarlane, Detroit.) Mr. Putnam is not a physician, but a clergyman who was chaplain of an asylum, and in this volume he recounts some of his experience as well as indulges in some historical retrospect. The book is temperate in its tone, somewhat desultory, and not especially instructive. — *A Guide to Sanitary House-Inspection*, or hints and helps regarding the choice of a healthful home in city or country, by W. P. Gerhard (Wileys): a sensible little volume, intended for householders rather than for professionals. — *A Text-Book of Nursing*, for the use of training schools, families, and private students, compiled by Clara S. Weeks. (Appleton.) While designed for regular tuition and examination of nurses, this book may profitably be used in any thorough training of young women in the practical duties of life. It does not attempt to render a physician superfluous, but to make the nurse more efficient. — *Psychiatry*, a clinical treatise on Diseases of the Fore-Brain, based upon a study of its structure, functions, and nutrition, by Theodor Meynert, M. D., translated, under authority of the author, by B. Sachs, M. D. Part I., *The Anatomy, Physiology, and Chemistry of the Brain*. (Putnams.) The anatomical facts given in this volume are made the basis of reasoning, which doubtless will be carried out more fully in the more strictly psychological portion of the work.

Political Economy and Public Affairs. Principles of Political Economy, by Simon Newcomb. (Harpers.) The author has attempted in this work to present the principles in a scientific manner and without the customary polemic method. Perhaps it is this consideration of a purely scientific spirit which leads him, in discussing the application of principles in the question of protection, to ignore wholly the view which makes national integrity a factor in the problem. — *The Postulates of English Political Economy*, by the late Walter Bagehot, with a preface by Alfred Marshall. (Putnams.) It is unfortunate that Mr. Bagehot could not have revised his work; with current information, we think, he would not have spoken of the Tehuantepec ship railway as a fraudulent scheme and a collapsed one. — *Protectionism, the ism* which teaches that waste makes wealth, by W. G. Sumner. (Holt.) Professor Sumner is rapidly reaching the point where he will burn heretics or knock them on the head. He has lost what little patience he may once have had with protectionists. He has given up trying to convince them, and devotes his attention now to exposing them. — *Practical Economics* is the title which Mr. David A. Wells gives to a collection of essays, printed originally in *The Atlantic* and elsewhere, respecting certain of the recent economic experiences of the United States. (Putnams.) Mr. Wells's long service as an economic writer enables him to bring to his work an advantage which younger students miss; he has lived through great changes in economic conditions, and has

been a watchful contemporary student, and not merely a retrospective inquirer. — *Railroad Transportation*, its history and its laws, by Arthur T. Hadley. (Putnams.) It is interesting to find a great subject like this, which has been attacked from a great variety of individual points of view and in multitudinous petty particulars, brought under review by a student who is not a railway manager, and who looks at the whole subject as an economical and political problem. Mr. Hadley's work shows a marked advance in American economical literature. — *The Silent South*, together with the *Freedman's Case in Equity* and the *Convict Lease System*, by George W. Cable. (Scribners.) Mr. Cable has collected in this volume his recent papers on the subjects which form the ground swell of political thought not so much in all America as in the South. For better or worse, the negro has been left, politically, to the States in which he is found; in respect of education and religion he is still the ward of the North, and it remains to be seen if each part of the country, using the means in its power, finds a certain ground of reconciliation and common work where once they found the occasion of conflict. — The third number of *Military Monographs* (Putnams) is the *Necessity for Closer Relations between the Army and the People*, and the best method to accomplish the result, by Captain George F. Price, U. S. A. Captain Price believes that we should organize the militia more perfectly and bring the regular army into more intimate connection with the volunteer force, but he does not give a very clear notion as to the relative part to be played by the general government and the state governments.

Books of Reference. Johnson's New General Cyclopædia and copper-plate hand-atlas of the world (Johnson) is a solid two-volume work; in effect, an expanded dictionary of nouns, proper and common. Further condensation is secured by an abundant use of abbreviations. The Cyclopædia is tolerably strong in brief legal definitions, though we miss Libel, and in biography gives perhaps less attention to literature than to science or mechanics. Alexander Agassiz, by the way, did not resign his position in 1855. There are some rather queer entries, like Rank of States. The work is freely illustrated, though there seems to be no law about the choice. Why should Chipmunk, for example, be given a cut as big as his neighbor Chlamydomorphus? The maps are clear and ugly. — Part II. of a New English Dictionary on historical principles has been published at the Clarendon Press, Oxford. (Macmillan, New York.) This is Dr. Murray's great work of which the first number appeared some time since; it is now promised more rapidly under the new arrangement of his residence at Oxford. This part covers Ant-Batten, and like the previous number is rich in historical illustration. The tracing of a word through its successive uses is the only thoroughly satisfactory lexical treatment for students, and if Dr. Murray's work is completed on its present plan it will be indispensable to literary and historical students. One might well buy each number as it appears for the sake of the amount of curious lore

which he will be sure to pick up in running it over.

Books on Art and Illustrated Books. Wonders of Sculpture, by Louis Viardot (Scribners), is a convenient book for giving one a running view of famous works. A chapter on American sculpture, descriptive rather than critical, is added by another hand. — Essays on the Art of Phidias, by Charles Waldstein (The Century Co.), is a work for the archæologist rather than the general reader. The essays on the sculptures of the Parthenon, with the preliminary chapters and the miscellaneous papers included in the appendix, will be found very interesting and valuable by the classical student. The volume is handsomely printed by Clay & Son, London, and is illustrated with numerous plates and wood-cuts. — Mr. S. R. Koehler's interesting history of Etching (Cassell & Co.) reached us too late to be included in our detailed notice of similar holiday books, among which it deserves a very high rank. — Keats's Eve of St. Agnes has been illustrated by Edmund H. Garrett (Estes & Lauriat) in a style which is perfectly creditable without either interpreting or magnifying the poem. Indeed, the richness of the poem would have permitted and encouraged a more strictly decorative form of embellishment. — A Library of Religious Poetry, a collection of the best poems of all ages and tongues, with biographical and literary notes, edited by Philip Schaff and Arthur Gilman. (Funk & Wagnalls.) This is a new edition of a work brought out a few years since, and we do not quite understand the preface in its date and statement. Certainly the editors have not thoroughly revised the book to the close of 1884, as therein stated. A number of steel plates illustrate the work.

Books for Young People. Chatterbox for 1885. (Estes & Lauriat.) This *mélange* of reading matter and pictures continues to come along, each year very much like the last. There are limits to the very good and the very bad, but there are no limits to the commonplace. — Historic Boys, their Endeavors, their Achievements, and their Times, by E. S. Brooks. (Putnams.) Mr. Brooks has selected a dozen boys of ancient and modern times, though he does not come down later than the eighteenth century, and has given literary portraits of them. They were all boys who were, so to speak, born to the purple, — indeed, it would have been difficult to find the early record of any others before democratic times; but then honor and courage and manliness were not born with democracy, and these stories, though perhaps a little galvanic in their activity, are honest attempts at making history real to the young by means of characters in whom they are supposed to be especially interested, and the deeds are such as point to the best elements of character. — Strange Stories from History for Young People, by George Cary Eggleston (Harpers): a score of stories from history, mediæval and modern. Mr. Eggleston has selected those subjects which give opportunity for telling of courage, perseverance, fortitude, and other manly virtues. but he also thinks it well to harrow the youthful soul with scenes from the life of Ivan IV. The stories are told

with a straightforward manner, but without grace or special dramatic skill. They are simply free from fustian and sentiment, and so have a negative excellence. — Three Vassar Girls in Italy, by Lizzie W. Champney. (Estes & Lauriat.) The three young women, who have been making excursions in other countries, have reached Italy, and find in that land plenty of material for letters, chats, and digests of printed books. We find Mrs. Champney's liveliness more agreeable than much of the frippery of books of this class, but it is amusing to see how the necessity to be entertaining may get the better of one. Here are two girls suffering from the cold, who play pease porridge hot to warm themselves, and during the game one gives the other a lecture on St. Mark's. We should like to have seen that performance. — Zig-Zag Journeys in the Levant, with a Talmudist storyteller, by Hezekiah Butterworth. (Estes & Lauriat.) This is the seventh, we think, of the series, and is as crammed with pictures as the rest. It is also written in the same queer, jumping-frog style, and has the same ingenious automatic toys of characters. — The first volume of The Child's Pictorial (S. P. C. K., London; Youngs, New York), a little monthly magazine with colored illustrations, is an exceedingly attractive book. Both pictures and stories deserve a word of hearty praise.

Practical Arts. First Lessons in Amateur Photography: a series of lectures delivered before the senior class of the Montclair High School by the principal, Randall Spaulding (Scovill Manufacturing Co., New York): a little volume intended to give specific directions to young people who have the photographic craze. — Wonders of Glass-Making in all Ages, by A. Sauzay (Scribners), is a scrappy, anecdotal book, by which one can pick up some curious information.

Theology and Philosophy. Christ and Christianity, — Studies on Christology, Creeds and Confessions, Protestantism and Romanism, Reformation Principles, Sunday Observance, Religious Freedom and Christian Union, — by Philip Schaff (Scribners): a collection of essays and addresses by Dr. Schaff, who is a learned rather than an original theologian. But his learning is so varied and so kindly that the reader picks up a great many very suggestive facts and ideas, and learns to regard the author's books as never-failing cisterns from which to draw well-filtered water, — a service not far behind that afforded by a fountain which is intermittent in its force. — The Idea of God, as affected by modern knowledge, by John Fiske. (Houghton.) In reprinting the papers which have appeared in The Atlantic, Mr. Fiske has added a readable preface in which he indicates the relation which the book bears to his previous writings. It is interesting to see the occupation of the theological field by other than clergymen, and it is a good sign of the widening of the field. — Darwinism and other Essays, by John Fiske. (Houghton.) This new edition of a collection of essays is enlarged by the addition of three others. Mr. Fiske's growing reputation makes his friends desirous of following him along the many tracks which he has marked out in his mental activity.